THE SULTANATE OF DELHI

(711—1526 A.D.)

INCLUDING

The Arab Invasion of Sindh, Hindu Rule in Afghanistan and Causes of the Defeat of the Hindus in Early Medieval Age

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PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

The book has been subjected to a careful revision and the mistakes and printing errors of the last edition have been corrected. The opportunity has been taken to add a few significant facts relating to the cultural intercourse between India and the Arab World.

Republic Day, 1964

A. L. SRIVASTAVA

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

In this edition the book has been thoroughly revised and two new chapters, viz., Hindu Rule in Afghanistan and Causes of the Defeat of the Hindus in Early Medieval Age, based on a study of original contemporary sources, have been added. Afghanistan was a part of India and was lost to it in 870 A.D. It has been shown in the Chapter on the causes of our defeat that India offered the greatest resistance known to History to the Arab and Turkish invaders from about the middle of the 7th century A.D. to about the end of the 12th century. Some of the author's conclusions might appear novel and even surprising. They are, however, based on a very close study of contemporary material in Arabic and Persian. It is hoped that in this new garb the SULTANATE OF DELHI will have as good a reception from the scholars as well as students and the general reading public as was accorded to it earlier.

Agra College,
Agra.
May 22, 1959.

A. L. SRIVASTAVA

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The welcome accorded to this book by students and teachers in our colleges and universities has encouraged the author to bring out its second edition. The first edition was exhausted within a year and a half of its publication and the present edition should have been in the hands of the reader before the end of 1952, but circumstances beyond the control of the author delayed its publication for about eight months.

In this edition the book has been carefully revised. Thanks to Mr. K.M. Munshi's enquiry, the riddle of Nasir-ud-din Khusrav Shah's origin, which baffled all previous writers, has been successfully solved by the author and is being given in this book for the first time. A few mistakes of dates and facts have been corrected and Chronology of the Delhi Sultans, geneological tables of the ruling dynasties and some illustrations of the period have been added.

Since the publication of the first edition of this book which for the first time laid down in unambiguous words that the rulers of the Sultanate period were foreigners, one or two scholars have tried to show that that was not so. In the introduction to the second edition of the second volume of Elliot and Dowson's *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Professor Muhammad Habib has asserted that the Muslim rule was not foreign rule and the only argument advanced by him in support of his view is that the Muslim rulers of the period had no 'home government' outside India. He forgets that nearly all the rulers of the period recognised at least in theory the foreign *Khalifa* to be their sovereign, and the Sultanate as a mere dependency of the Caliphate. They sent cash and presents of enormous value to the Khalifa and large sums of money to be spent in Mecca, Medina and other places sacred to Islam. True, they had made India their home, but their aim was to convert it into an Islamic country. The personnel of their government was foreign; the religion and culture which they wanted to impose on India was foreign; their system of government and their way of life were foreign. They looked to Arabia and Central Asia for inspiration. They had little sympathy with the religion, culture, tradition and

way of life of the people of this country which they held in military occupation. They were unwilling to become Indians and generations' sojourn in this country failed to Indianise them completely. Professor P. Hardy is of opinion that the government of the Sultans discharged socialistic functions because it interfered with the religion of the Hindus. This interference might have amounted to socialistic work in the eyes of Muslims, but to the Hindus who formed a vast majority of the population, it was nothing less than cultural and national destruction. The author regrets his inability to accept the views of the above scholars.

The present edition has been seen through the press by the author's son Daya Bhanu, without whose genuine help it would have been delayed for months.

Agra College,
Agra.
Sept. 20, 1953.

A. L. Srivastava

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

This book is primarily intended for the under-graduates in our universities. The author has kept in view the requirements of the students preparing for the B.A. Examination, but it is hoped that it will prove equally useful to higher students, to those intending to appear at Competitive Examinations and to the teachers in our colleges.

It is a text-book and not a research production; but not a text-book of the usual variety found in the market, for it is based on a close study of the original contemporary sources in Persian and other languages with which the author is intimately acquainted. This work discusses for the first time the how and the why of the important problems of the period, such as, (1) the quick and easy over-running of our country by the foreign Arab and Turkish invaders; (2) their failure to exterminate us as a people and a culture-unit, as they had successfully blotted out the other peoples of Asia and Africa that they had invaded; (3) the impact of Islam on us; (4) our inability to absorb the new-comers, though we had successfully assimilated the Greeks, the Sakas and the Huns; and (5) the adjustment of our relations with the Indian Muslims, a problem which baffles our leaders and statesmen even today. Unfortunately, all previous works on the subject are so designed as to give the history of the progress of Islam in India. In the present book an attempt has been made to write the history of the country. Not only the text-books but even specialised monographs have called our Arab and Turko-Afghan rulers by the misleading term 'Muslim'. This has been responsible for two wrong notions—(i) Indian converts to Islam and their descendants have wrongly imagined that they were the ruling class in Medieval India, and, unhappily, this absolutely wrong notion prevails in certain quarters even today; and (ii) most of our people have, for generations, held the ancestors of Indian Muslims responsible for the wrongs, particularly religious persecution, perpetrated chiefly by our foreign Arab, Turk and Afghan rulers. All such errors have been avoided in this volume. Besides, an attempt has been made to emphasise and give everything relevant and important regarding our administrative, social, cultural and

economic achievements, though not at the cost of the political history of the period. The book is illustrated with twelve specially drawn and accurate maps which are a definite improvement upon all existing ones.

The author is well aware of the imperfections of this volume, as the entire work was dictated to a stenographer. The plan of the book being what it is, repetitions could not be avoided. In fact, the concluding chapters, discussing in a connected manner the evolution of our medieval administrative, social and cultural institutions, could not but be summaries of the measures undertaken during the various reigns. In order to help the students to picture in their minds the evolution of institutions or the culmination of a career, it has been thought desirable to provide matter, as far as possible, in one place. The book is written in the simplest possible language so as to make it intelligible to our under-graduate students.

My thanks are due to my friend Dr. Birjadish Prasad, D. Phil., for going through the MS before it was sent to the press. My sons, Dharma Bhanu, M.A., and Daya Bhanu, have laboriously read the proofs and Dharma Bhanu has prepared the maps with care and devotion. I am thankful to my publishers and to Pt. Dharma Chand Bhargava of the Amrit Electric Press for the interest they have taken in the printing and publication of the book.

Agra College,
Agra.
September 1, 1950.

A. L. Srivastava

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1

OUR COUNTRY ON THE EVE OF THE ARAB INVASION

Political condition

For centuries after the death of the great Ashoka in 232 B.C. our country did not enjoy complete political unity. The entire land from the Himalayas to Cape Camorin never afterwards came under one central government of any Hindu prince or political leader. During the first half of the seventh century A.D., when the Arabian Prophet, Muhammad, was preaching his new militant religion and his successors were rapidly subjugating the neighbouring countries, Harsha was laying the foundation of a great empire in north-western India. But this empire did not embrace the whole of north India even, to say nothing of the territory south of the Vindhya mountains which baffled Harsha's attempt at conquest and annexation. And when that great monarch closed his eyes in 647 A.D., his empire broke to pieces, followed by a scramble among petty princes for supremacy in the land. Political confusion prevailed in this region (Madhyadesha) for more than 50 years. The situation did not fully stabilise till the rise of Yasovarman in the first half of the eighth century A.D. The remaining parts of the country, too, were parcelled out, as before, among independent monarchs of varying degrees of power and prestige, whose main pursuit was military glory and aggressive warfare.

There was no central government for the whole of the country that could think and act for the entire sub-continent. All the states enjoyed complete independence and sovereignty. There was no such question as the defence of the frontiers of India by the united might of the Indian people, as the north-western and north-eastern frontiers were the frontiers of petty independent kingdoms.

Geographically and politically, there were four groups of States in the country, namely, (1) the Himalayan group, (2) the Indo-Gangetic plain, (3) the Dakhin States, and (4) the Southern Peninsular States. There was nothing to prevent a State from expanding beyond its own zone into a neighbouring one. In fact, such expansion by military conquest was common enough during the period under

review, for the ancient Kshatriya ideal of *Digvijaya*, that is, the conquest of the entire sub-continent, still swayed the ambition of our rulers. But this ideal was never hereafter fully realized.

The Himalayan States

Afghanistan : In spite of the ups and downs of fortune the region now known as Afghanistan remained a part of our country since the time of Chandragupta Maurya, who had conquered it from Seleukos Nikator in or about 305 B.C. The famous Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsiang found a Kshatriya prince ruling over the Kabul valley. This dynasty reigned till about the end of the ninth century A.D. About that time the Kshatriya ruling family was supplanted by a Brahman dynasty founded by Lalliya. Muslim historians called this Hindu kingdom of Afghanistan by the name of the kingdom of Kabul and Zabul. It was also called the Hindushahi kingdom. We have no means of ascertaining the name of the ruler or the extent of this kingdom in the early years of the eighth century when Sindh was invaded by the Arabs. Certain it is that the inhabitants of that region were Hindus or Buddhists or both and, culturally, politically and economically, part and parcel of the Indian people.

Kashmir : Kashmir had originally formed part of the empires of Ashoka, Kanishka and Mihirgula. It was, however, an independent kingdom at the time of Harsha. In fact, in the seventh century A.D., it rose to be a first-rate power under a local dynasty, called Karkota, founded by Durlabhavardhan. His grandson, Chandrapida, was a contemporary of Raja Dahir of Sindh who fell victim to the Arab aggression in 712 A.D. Chandrapida was succeeded by his younger brother, Muktipida Lalitaditya (725-755 A.D.), who was an ambitious and powerful ruler and defeated Yasovarman of Kanauj. He built the great Sun Temple at Martand (modern Matan), which, though half-burnt and destroyed by the fanatical Sikandar, the Idol Breaker, still stands in its ruined condition like a giant structure and proclaims to the world the piety and love of art of its builder.

Nepal : By reason of its secluded situation, the mountainous kingdom of Nepal has not played an important part in the history of our country. But it was, without doubt, an integral part of ancient India. According to tradition, this isolated valley was included in the empire of Ashoka. The later Lichhavis also seem to have held it. It was certainly a part of the wide dominion of the Indian Napoleon, Samudragupta, who was acknowledged as over-lord by the

ruler of Nepal. After the break-up of the Gupta empire in the fifth century A.D., Nepal seems to have become independent. In the seventh century, when Tibet rose to be a powerful kingdom, Nepal came under its vassalage; but its cultural relations with India remained unaffected. Nepal accepted Buddhist religion and exchanged scholars and missionaries with our country.

Assam : Assam, on the north-eastern extremity, was another mountainous region that constituted a kingdom and came into frequent clash with Bangal. Harsha's contemporary on the throne of Assam (Kamarupa) was Bhaskaravarman. He was an ambitious prince. He seems to have accepted the position of a vassal to the great Harsha, who made use of him in his conflict with the king of West Bangal. After Harsha's death Assam became an independent kingdom. But, on account of its remoteness, it played little part in the history of our country during the period.

The Indo-Gangetic Plain

Kanauj : After reigning for more than forty years over the Madhyadesha or Central Hindustan, the great Harsha died in 647 A.D., leaving his extensive empire, which embraced the East Panjab in the north-west and Kamarupa in the east, the Himalayas in the north and the Narbada in the south, to his weak successors who struggled to maintain it intact, but failed to do so for any length of time. Their efforts were frustrated, as Kanauj, having for long been the imperial city, was a cynosure of all eyes and every powerful and ambitious north-Indian prince made it the object of his highest ambition to conquer and rule over it. Adityasena of Malwa and Magadh emerged triumphant in this contest in about 672 A.D., when he performed the 'horse sacrifice' (*Ashwamedha*). But his ascendancy was short-lived. Early in the eighth century we find Yasovarman, who traced his descent from the moon, on the throne of Kanauj. He was an enterprising and successful ruler. He restored Kanauj to its former position of glory. The kingdom of Kanauj under him once again extended from Bangal in the east to Thaneshwar and the East Panjab in the north-west, and from the Himalayas in the north to the Narbada in the south. Yasovarman maintained diplomatic relations with some of the Asian countries, notably China. He was a contemporary of King Dahir of Sindh. He died fighting against Lalitaditya of Kashmir.

Sindh : Sindh, situated to the south-west of the Hindushahi

kingdom of Kabul and the West Panjab, had long been an independent kingdom. It was ruled by a Sudra dynasty which held sway for about 140 years. When Hiuen Tsiang visited India he found a Sudra ruler in Sindh. The province was over-run by Prabhakarvardhan and was reduced to vassalage by his son, Harsha. It became independent after Harsha's death. After the death of the last Sudra king, Sahsi, his throne was seized by his Brahman minister, Chach, who laid the foundation of a new dynasty. Chach was succeeded by his brother, Chandra, on whose death the former's son, Dahir, became king. The new ruling family had hardly held the province for a few decades when it had to face the Arab invasion under Muhammad bin Qasim. There was no sympathy between the ruler and his subjects who were mostly Buddhists and were much oppressed by the Brahman rule.

Bangal : During the early centuries of the Christian era Bangal was divided into two parts, each independent of the other. The western and north-western parts were known as Gaud and, so also, their people, while the eastern and central parts were called Vanga. Both these provinces were parts of the empires of the Mauryas and the Guptas. But, after the fall of the imperial Guptas, Bangal seems to have become independent. Sasanka was Harsha's contemporary on the throne of Gaud. He seems to have only vaguely recognised the supremacy of Kanauj. After the death of Sasanka, Gaud was occupied by Bhaskarvarman, king of Assam, who was an ally of Harsha. During the early years of the eighth century A.D., Bangal was over-run by Yasovarman, king of Kanauj, and, for a number of years, there was much confusion in the province. Peace and prosperity returned, however, with the accession to the throne of the two Bangals, that is, Gaud and Varga, of Gopala, the founder of the Pala dynasty, sometime in the first half of the eighth century A.D.

Malwa : Malwa, with its capital at Ujjain, was another important kingdom during the eighth century. It was ruled by a Pratihara Rajput dynasty. The Pratiharas were a clan of the Gurjaras who established themselves in Marwar (Jodhpur), Avanti (Ujjain) and Broach. The Pratiharas of Ujjain came into conflict with the Arab invaders of Sindh who had attempted to extend their conquest into the heart of the country. The Arab leader, Junaid, swept over the western part of the Pratihara dominion about 725-35 A.D. But Nagabhatta I (725-740 A.D.) soon succeeded in turning the tables

against the Arabs and recovering his lost territory. Under his successors Ujjain rose to be a mighty power in northern India.

The Dakhin

The Vakatakas : In the fourth century there were two powerful kingdoms in southern India, one in the Upper Dakhin and the other further south with its capital at Kanchi or modern Conjeeveram. The former was ruled by the Vakataka dynasty and the latter by the Pallava dynasty. Chandragupta Vikramaditya of the Gupta dynasty established matrimonial relations with the Vakatakas, giving his daughter, Prabhavati, in marriage to the Vakataka king, Rudrasena II. The descendants of Rudrasena continued to rule in the Dakhin for several generations.

The Pallavas : The Pallava kingdom of Kanchi lay to the south of the Vakataka dominions. Its ruler, Vishnugopa, was captured and then released by Samudragupta about the middle of the fourth century A.D. The dynasty produced a series of able rulers, one of whom, named, Simhavishnu, was said to have annexed the Chola country and defeated all his southern neighbours, including the king of Ceylon, in the second half of the sixth century A.D. A little later great rivalry ensued between the Pallavas and the Chalukyas of Vatapi. Eventually, Vikramaditya II of Vatapi over-ran the Pallava dominion and occupied Kanchi in the first half of the eighth century, when the Arabs were consolidating their hold in Sindh. The decadent Pallava kingdom, however, lingered on till its final extinction towards the end of the ninth century A.D.

The Far South

From very ancient times there were three kingdoms in the Far South, namely, the Pandya, the Chola and the Chera or Kerala. The Pandya kingdom comprised the territory representing the modern Madura and Tennavelly districts and parts of Trichinapoly and the Travancore State. The Chola kingdom included most of the present Mysore State, the district of Madras and several other districts lying east of that town. The Chera or Kerala principality embraced most of the States of Cochin and Travancore and the Malabar districts. These kingdoms were overpowered by the Pallavas, who established their political supremacy over almost the entire Southern Peninsula.

Administrative system

Kingship : The only form of government known to our

ancestors of the seventh and the eighth centuries A.D. was monarchy. Ancient republics of the early Buddhist times had completely disappeared. Kingship was generally hereditary. Usually the king nominated his successor, who was in most cases his eldest son. Election was however, not altogether unknown. Gopala, the founder of the famous Pala dynasty of Bangal, was elected by the notable political elements of that province in the first half of the eighth century A.D., and the Pallava King, Nandi Varman Pallavamalla of Kanchi in southern India, was similarly elected at about the same time. At a time of crisis the choice of a monarch was entrusted to a select body of nobles or Brahmans or both. Many such cases of selection by notables are on record, the most important among them being that of the great Harshavardhan of Thaneshwar and Kanauj who was chosen by a council of nobles to fill the vacant throne of his late brother, Rajyavardhan. Females were not debarred from succession to the royal throne, and there had been women rulers, specially in Kashmir, Orissa and some parts of southern India.

Powers of the king: The monarchs of this period were absolute or despotic rulers. It was widely believed that the king was God's representative on earth and was, therefore, superior in power and intelligence to other people. There were, however, some critics of the divine right theory. The king's powers were restricted only by well-established laws and traditions and by the fear of a rebellion on the part of the people. He was the chief executive, commander of the army and the fountainhead of justice. Inspite of the combination of these wide powers and functions, he was not a tyrant, as he was governed by the traditional *raj-dharma* which was to be the father of the people, and to always act for their welfare, physical, moral and material.

Ministers and their functions : Every king had his ministers who were his nominees and servants. Their number was not fixed, and, in fact, could not be constant in all cases. Manu prescribes seven to eight ministers, a number which might have been generally followed. There were two types of ministers, namely, confidential advisers (*Mantrins*), and ministers properly so-called (*Sachivas*). To the latter category belonged (*a*) ministers of war and peace (*Sandhi-vigrahikas*), (*b*) ministers in charge of records (*Akshapataladhikrita*), (*c*) ministers in charge of military duties (*Mahabaladhikrita* and *Mahadandanayaka*), (*d*) finance ministers (*Amatya*), and (*e*) foreign

ministers (*Sumant*). Besides, there was a *raj-guru* or *raj-purohit* whose rank was equal to a minister's and who held the portfolio of religion. There was no bar to militarymen holding a civil portfolio. Certain ministerships had become hereditary. All strings of policy being concentrated in the king's hands, the importance of a minister depended upon his ability, strength of character and loyalty and the degree of his sovereign's confidence in him. In matters which did not involve change of policy and in day-to-day administration, ministers must have enjoyed full powers over their respective departments.

Local Government : For administrative purposes every kingdom was divided into provinces which bore different designations in different parts, such as, *Bhukti* in the north and *Mandala* in the south. They were sometimes known as *Desa* or *Rashtra*. The province was in the charge of a governor called *Uparika*. Every province was divided into *Vishayas* (districts) with a *Vishayapati* (district officer) at its head. Both *Uparikas* (governors) and *Vishayapatis* (district officers) were appointed by the king and were members of either royal or noble families. The district officers were assisted in the work of administration by the guild president, chief scribe (*Kayastha*), and some of the notable men of the district. In certain parts, notably south India, districts were further sub-divided into unions of villages with a headman and an assembly for the administration of the union. The village was everywhere the lowest union of administration. In every village there was a headman and a *Panchayat* consisting of village elders or notables. There were committees for looking after watch and ward, tanks, temples, education, etc. Besides the headman there was a village officer styled *Adhikarin* or *Adhikari*, whose main business was to supervise the work of the *Panchayat*. In towns and cities the management was in the hands of an officer called *Nagarpati*. In some towns there was a popular assembly to assist the *Nagarpati* in the administration.

Finance : Great attention was paid to finance, for it was realised as early as the days of the eminent political thinker and statesman, Kautilya, that this was one of the two most important departments of government, the other being the army. There were three main sources of income, namely, (*a*) land revenue from the crown land, that is, those areas of the country which were directly administered by the government, (*b*) tributes from the vassal chiefs, and (*c*) taxes

other than land revenue, such as excise, irrigation duties on goods charged at ferries, roads and frontiers of the kingdom, income from mines, etc. The State's share of the produce of the soil was usually one-sixth and was called *bhag*. We do not know the rates of other taxes. Perhaps there was no income-tax. There were one or two emergency taxes. The items of expenditure were civil administration, army and the king's household. There might have been some kind of budget-making, though it might not be scientific like what we have nowadays. The economic system must have been very sound indeed, for the country was extremely prosperous. People were well off and free from want.

Buddhism was declining. Most of the kings of this period were the followers of the Hindu religion. These kings, however, were very tolerant towards all faiths. In fact, they patronised Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism at one and the same time. There was no religious antipathy among the people and no religious persecution. The common people as well as the upper classes seem to have been inspired by high spiritual ideals.

Society and culture

We get a clear picture of the social and cultural condition of the people from many inscriptions and writings of foreign travellers, Chinese and Arab. Caste system was gradually becoming rigid. Nevertheless, foreigners could become Hindus and get absorbed in our society and be given a place in the caste hierarchy. Attempts were made to keep castes to their spheres of duty, but without success. During this period some of the Brahmans took to the profession of arms, while some of the Kshatriyas lived as merchants. Vaisyas and Sudras were powerful rulers. Though people married generally in their own castes, inter-marriages between different castes were not unknown.

In Central Hindustan a majority of the people were vegetarians. They did not kill any living being and did not drink liquor. Nor did they eat onions or garlic. The people of this region did not consider those belonging to north-western India as quite pure. There was untouchability and *chandalas* were required to make their presence known by striking a piece of wood while entering the market-place or the quarters inhabited by upper class people. There was very little of seclusion of women. Women of the upper classes took a prominent share in administration and in social life. Girls belonging to upper

classes were given liberal education. The practice of *swayamvara* or public choice of a husband was not unknown. Upper class people practised polygamy. Women, however, were not allowed to marry a second time. The practice of *sati*, that is, burning of widows on the funeral pyre of their husbands, was becoming fashionable among the ruling families.

The country, particularly the Madhyadesha, was thickly populated. The people were prosperous and happy. Their material condition was very good. Wealth was, however, confined to a small group of people who were very rich indeed. It was considered obligatory on, and, in fact, a pious duty of, the rich people to establish charitable institutions and to alleviate the poverty and sufferings of the poor. The rich built roads, *dharmashalas* and other buildings of public utility. They laid out gardens and constructed tanks and sunk wells for public use. There were houses of charity which provided free board and lodging to travellers. There were charitable dispensaries. The people, on the whole, were noted for their righteousness and benevolence.

All over the country there were schools and colleges, and the people, in general, were well educated. The universities of Nalanda in Bihar and Valabhi in western India were the most famous educational institutions in the country. There were other universities, too, particularly at Kashi (Banaras), Uddandapura and Vikramasila in Bihar, and some other holy places in northern and southern India. There was a big Sanskrit college at Dhar in Malwa and another at Ajmer. There were colleges of astronomy and other sciences also. Besides the Vedas and other religious literature and Puranas and Dharmashastra, other subjects, such as science, astronomy and medicine, were taught in most of these colleges and universities.

It would appear from the above narrative that economically, culturally and spiritually, the condition of the people on the eve of the Arab invasion was, indeed, good. The administration of the various States was, on the whole, efficient and it consulted the welfare of the people. The main drawback, however, was the lack of political unity and a sense of patriotism.

2

THE ARAB CONQUEST OF SINDH AND MULTAN
[711—713 A.D.]

Sindh on the eve of Arab conquest

The eighth century Hindu kingdom of Sindh was larger in area than the modern province of that name and extended to Kashmir in the north, Kanauj in the east and the sea in the south. In the north-west it included a large portion of modern Baluchistan and the Makran coast. Its capital was at Alor (modern Rohri), and the Kingdom was divided into four provinces, each of which was in charge of a semi-independent governor. The King's direct jurisdiction extended over the central part of his kingdom, while the governors were the real masters of the provinces and were described as tributary rulers. The king was Sudra by caste and Buddhist by religion.[1] At the beginning of the seventh century A.D., the reigning sovereign Sahiras fell in a battle with Nimruz of Persia who had invaded Sindh and entered Kirman. He was succeeded by his son, Sahasi Rai II, who was overthrown by his Brahman minister Chach who put his royal master to death and seized the throne. The usurper married the widowed queen of his predecessor and suppressed the rebellious governors who had refused to acknowledge his authority. He also conquered a part of Makran in modern Baluchistan and imposed his authority on Kandabil in that country. Chach was succeeded by his brother Chandar. But the latter died soon after, and there was a dispute for the throne between his son Duraj and the eldest son of Chach, named Dahir. Eventually Duraj was defeated and ousted, and Chach's two sons Dahir and Daharsiah (both of whom were born of the widowed queen of Sahasi Rai II) divided the kingdom. On Daharsiah's death Dahir became the sole ruler of Sindh. On the eve of the Arab conquest the country was very much weakened on account of political changes and internal strife. Its heterogeneous population was sparse and lacked social solidarity owing to the oppression of the lower orders of the society by the ruling hierarchy. Its resources too were small. Above all, King Dahir was unpopular,

1 *Yuan Chwang*, Vol. II, p. 252; *Elliot and Dowson*, Vol. I, pp. 410-11.

INDIA IN 713 A.D.
The Arab Conquest.

R. Oxus
Bukhara
Samarqand
TRANS-OXIANA
CHINA
Balkh
Quaduz
Ghur
KABUL-ZABUL
Kabul
Purushpur
KASHMIR
Srinagar
TIBET
Nandanah
Sialkot
Kangara
Kandahar
Lahore
Jalander
Dipalpur
Sarhind
Multan
Samana
Sunam
Thaneshwar
Hisar
Hansi
Delhi
Uch
Kalat
BALUCHISTAN
Amardha
R. Brahmaputra
NEPAL
Bikaner
Kail
Mathura
Agra
Kanauj
Ayodhya
AWADH
Larkhana
Rajar
SUNDH
Brahmanabad
Sehwan
Haiderabad
Mansura
MAKRAN
PRATIHARAS
Jodhpur
Ajmer
Bayana
Ranthambhor
Gwelior
Rabri
Nirun
Amarkot
Thatta
Debal
Jalor
Abu
Chittor
Mahoba
Kalinjar
Prayag
Kashi
Pattiputra
GAUR
Gaur
KAMARUPA
Gaya
Khajuraho
Ashilwara
MALWA
PRATIHARAS
Ujjain
Bhilsa
Garha Mandal
VANGA
Nadia
Satgaon
Sonargaon
Chatgaon
Dhar
Mandu
Somanath
Broach
Illichpur
Diu
Daman
Jajnagar
BURMA
Dengiri
VAKATAKAS
KALINGA
ARABIAN
SEA
Bombay
Thana
Janjira
Kalyani
Warangal
Rajamundry
BAY
OF
BANGAL
Dabhol
Raichur
Sendabur
PALLAVAS
CHOLAS
Kanchi
Kampil
ANDAMAN Is.
Dwarasamudra
Calicut
PANDYAS
Tanjore
KERALAS
Madura
Colombo
CEYLON

Boundary of the Arab Empire.

0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles

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as he was a usurper's son. It was this ruler who had to face a large-scale invasion of his country by the greatest and most mighty empire of the age.

The causes

Since time immemorial there had been commercial intercourse between India and Arabia. Long before the Arabs embraced Islam in the seventh century A.D., they used to visit our western coastal regions for trade and commerce and received a cordial welcome here. Our rulers and peoples, anxious to foster material prosperity, accorded generous treatment to these foreigners. There was hardly any change in our attitude towards them even after the Arabs had become Muslims. But certainly the Arab attitude towards our people and country underwent a great change owing to their religious and political cohesion and to the enthusiasm brought about in their native land by the teachings of Muhammad. Though commercial profit continued to be the avocation of a section of them, as before, the Arabian people, as a whole, had now begun cherishing the ambition of conquest and propagation of Islam. Their first expedition which aimed at the conquest of Thana near Bombay was undertaken as early as 636 A.D. (15 A.H.) during the Caliphate of Umar, but it was repulsed.[2] This was followed by successive expeditions to Broach,[3] to the Gulf of Debal in Sindh and to Baluchistan (Makran), then a part of the Kingdom of Sindh.[4] In spite of difficulties and defeats the Arabs continued raiding the frontier of Sindh both by land and sea. They concentrated their attacks on Kikan (Kikanan), a hilly region round the Bolan pass which was peopled by hardy Jats who led pastoral lives and who bravely defended their country from the Arab invaders. In 659 A.D. (39 A.H.) al-Haris gained some initial success, but was defeated and killed in 662 A.D.[5] Another fruitless expedition was that of al-Muhallab in 664 A.D.[6] He was followed by Abdullah who was defeated and slain. Sinan bin Salamah seems to have been fortunate in gaining a short-lived triumph in Makran, but Rashid bin Amir lost his life in an expedition in that very region.[7] The same fate overtook another Arab adventurer named al-Mudhir. Notwithstanding these successive failures the Arabs persevered on and captured Makran, that is, modern Baluchistan, most of which

2 *Biladuri, K. F. B.*, Part II, p. 209.
3 *Ibid.*
4 *Ibid*, p. 210.
5 *Ibid.*
6 *Ibid.*
7 *Ibid*, pp. 211-12.

then formed a part of Sindh "after a fierce and successful campaign" under Ibn al-Harri al-Bahitti in the first decade of the eighth century A.D. The way to the conquest of Sindh proper now lay open and the ambitious al-Hajjaj, the Arab governor of Iraq, secured the Caliph's support to his forward policy. He despatched one after another two well-planned expeditions against Dahir; but both these expeditions were beaten and their commanders Ubaidullah and Budail were slain on the fields of battle.[8] Stung by these successive reverses and humiliation, Hajjaj selected his own cousin and son-in-law Imad-ud-din Muhammad bin Qasim, an ambitious and daring youth of seventeen, and despatched him to Sindh at the head of a powerful force. Starting from Shiraz, he reached Makran which now belonged to the Arabs, and passing *via* Panj-gur, Armbil and Qaubati, he arrived at Debal near Karachi. This attempt proved a success, and Sindh and Multan were conquered in 712-13 A.D. Sindh thus lost its independence after more then seventy-five years' brave resistance against the mightiest empire of the medieval age.

Some modern scholars, notably, Woolseley Haig, seem to hold that the main cause of the conflict between the Arabs and Sindh was the provocation given by the latter owing to its ruler's failure to make a reparation for certain Arab ships plundered by some pirates off the coast of Sindh. The details given above from contemporary sources, however, reveal the fact that ever since their rise to power the Arabs had cast their eyes on our rich ports and had before their final success in 712 A.D. made many unsuccessful attempts to capture Sindh and the kingdoms of Kabul and Zabul by force of arms. Their design on India and their successful conquest of Sindh was only a part of their general aggressive scheme which brought under their sway, within a hundred years of the death of their Prophet, Syria, Mesopotamia, Armenia, Iran, Baluchistan, Trans-Oxiana, the whole of the northern coast of Africa, Upper and Lower Egypt, Spain and Portugal and the southern part of France, besides their own native Arabia. Thus the political and territorial ambition of the Arabs, and not the brigandage of the Sindh pirates, constituted an important cause of their invasion of Sindh. Coupled with this was the over-powering economic incentive, the desire to acquire wealth by easy and quick means, that is, fighting and plundering, and thereby to improve their material condition. But the principal driving force

8 *Ibid*, p. 216.

was the religious zeal which made them feel and act as if God was using them as agents for the propagation of Islam and the uprooting of infidel faiths from the face of the earth. Almost all the modern writers have either ignored or minimised the religious cause, forgetting the stark naked truth that the Arabs not only imposed their own religion and culture on the conquered people everywhere, but even almost completely wiped out the indigenous faiths and ways of life from most of the countries that they subjugated. Verily, the Arab ambition of imposing Islam on Sindh was one of the most powerful causes of this invasion.

The occasion or rather the pretext for the final conflict was the charge that some Sindhi pirates had plundered a few Arab vessels off the coast of Debal near Thana. The story is variously related by different writers and seems to be apocryphal. One version is that the ruler of Ceylon had despatched to Hajjaj, governor of Iraq, a part of the Arabian empire, orphan daughters of some Arab merchants who had died in his country and when the ships carrying them and their belongings reached the coast of Sindh they were plundered by Sindhi pirates. Another writer says that the king of Ceylon, who had embraced Islam (which is historically incorrect), was sending tribute and valuable presents to the Khalifa himself and that these were plundered. A third source has recorded that the Khalifa had sent agents to India to buy some female slaves and certain other articles and these were plundered and carried off by brigands near Debal. It is said that Hajjaj was deeply affected by the outrage. He wrote to king Dahir of Sindh to punish the culprits and make reparations for the loss. Dahir replied that the pirates were not his subjects and that he was powerless to punish them. This infuriated Hajjaj, who obtained Khalifa Walid's permission to send an expedition against Dahir. Accordingly, Ubaidullah was despatched at the head of a respectable army, but he was defeated by Dahir and slain on the battle-field. The next expedition under Budail was also beaten and the commander killed. Muhammad bin Qasim, an ambitious and daring youth of seventeen, was now chosen to punish the king of Sindh.

Strength of the invading forces

Muhammad bin Qasim started at the head of an army, fifteen thousand strong, consisting of 6,000 Syrian horse, 'the flower of the armies of the Caliphs,' 6,000 camelry and a baggage train of 3,000

Bactrian camels who, too, were trained to fight and must be reckoned as combatants. He was joined near Makran by some more troops under Muhammad Harun, while his artillery, which consisted of five catapults, was sent by sea to join him at Debal. Each of these five catapults or *balistas* was worked by 500 trained men, making the total of his artillery men 2,500. Add to this the Arab advance guard under Abul Aswad Jahan who was sent to join his chief on the border of Sindh and we have a total of about 25,000 troops which constituted the Arab army of invasion under Muhammad bin Qasim. His numbers continued to swell as the result of his initial success and reached the figure of 50,000. This (50,000)[9] was the strength of his army when Muhammad bin Qasim proceeded to Multan after the subjugation of Sindh. These figures did not include his troops who fell in various battles during the campaign and those that were left in garrisons in the towns of Sindh.

On the other hand, Dahir's resources and the population of his country could not afford to employ an army of his opponent's size. All unimpeachable sources agree that Dahir's army was far inferior in numbers and equipment to that of the Arabs under Muhammad bin Qasim.

The conquest of Debal

Either the Intelligence department of the Sindh government was hopeless or King Dahir was an extremely lethargic ruler and did not realize the imminent danger he was in. At any rate, he committed the fatal mistake of remaining inactive at his capital, Aror, over 150 miles away from Debal, and allowed the invader to capture a considerable portion of southern Sindh. He did not make any real attempt to check the progress of the invading army, nor did he send any reinforcement to Debal which had a slender garrison of 4,000 troops as against the mighty invading army numbering over 25,000. Muhammad besieged the town which was protected by a strong stone-wall and his *balistas* rained stones on the garrison from the side of the sea. Our troops fought bravely, but they were hopelessly out-numbered. During the course of the siege, a Brahman from the chief temple deserted to the Arabs and informed Muhammad that as long as the red flag, to the base of which a talisman was tied, remained flying at the top of the temple, the town

[9] *Elliot and Dowson*, Vol. I, p. 435.

could never be taken. Muhammad's *balista* was now directed against the flag-staff which fell after a little initial failure, encouraging the Arabs beyond measure. This must have disheartened the garrison. Yet they made a bold sortie, but were repulsed. Conscious of the vast superiority of their numbers, the Arabs now climbed the walls by means of ladders and captured Debal. The people of the town were asked to choose between Islam and death. They preferred the latter. For three days a fearful carnage continued. All the males of seventeen years and above were put to death, and their women and children were carried into slavery. Temples were destroyed and mosques built in their places. A vast amount of valuable plunder of various kinds, including human booty, fell into the hands of the victor, one-fifth of which was duly sent to the Khalifa through Hajjaj. Thus did the first important town of India fall into the hands of the Arabs, not due to any cowardice on the part of the Indian soldiers, but owing to the lethargy of an Indian ruler and the overwhelming superior force of the enemy.

Contest with Dahir ; the fall of Sindh

Having placed Debal under an Arab governor with a garrison of 4,000 troops, Muhammad proceeded towards Nirun, then an important town about 75 miles north-east of Debal and situated near Jarak, just south of the modern Hyderabad, and after seven days' march reached and captured the place early in 712 A.D. without any resistance as the Buddhists there, being in treacherous collusion with the enemy, gave him active assistance. Dahir once again failed to move and left the inhabitants to their fate. Flushed with success, the Arabs now marched rapidly to Sehwan, which, too, fell after a week's siege, its governor, Bajhra, a cousin of Dahir, having left the place owing to the pusillanimity of the principal men of the town, who, being traders and priests, did not like to fight. Then came the turn of Sisam on the Kumbh, which was lost by the Jats after two days' unequal fighting. From Sisam Muhammad returned towards Nirun in order to cross the Mihran, the main stream of the Indus, and to meet Dahir who was entrenched at Brahmanabad. He was detained for months on the western bank of the river owing to want of boats and to the breakout of scurvy which reduced the number of his horses. After he had received a reinforcement of 2,000 horses and medicine for the ailing animals

from Hajjaj, he crossed over to the other side, along with his whole force without meeting much resistance.

Dahir, who seems to have pinned his faith on a pitched battle, was now roused to a sense of the danger he had landed himself in by his policy of drift, and collected, according to the Arab accounts, 50,000 troops, raised mostly on the spur of the moment, and moved from Brahmanabad to Rawar to meet the invader. After several days' skirmishes between the scouts of both the sides, a well contested engagement took place on 20th June, 712 A.D. Dahir himself, mounted on an elephant, led the attack, as if to redeem his character. He rehabilitated his reputation as a soldier, though not as a general, by a valiant fight. But his elephant, being struck by a naphtha arrow that set fire to the *hauda*, fled into the river, causing a great deal of confusion in the ranks of his army. The animal was, however, induced to return from the mid-stream. Dahir hit the enemy hard and carried out great slaughter among the Arab troops. But, as ill-luck would have it, he himself was struck by an arrow and fell from the elephant. He recovered himself in an instant and mounted a horse. Meanwhile the enemy hurled a mortal blow at him and his army fled in panic.[10]

The concluding part of the tragic drama might afford some consolation to the Indian patriot. The women of Sindh, headed by Dahir's widow, Rani Bai, made an attempt to expiate for the sins of their men-folk. The Rani put up a heroic defence within the fort of Rawar and her garrison, 15,000 strong, rained stones and missiles on the besieging Arabs, causing them considerable headache. When it became impossible to hold out any longer, she performed the traditional *jauhar* along with her women followers, after the Rajput fashion, in order not to fall into the hands of the 'unclean' foreigners.[11] Brahmanabad (north of Hyderabad), too, like Rawar, redeemed its fair name. Here had gathered the remnants of Dahir's troops who fought with a grim determination, losing 8,000 (according to another account 20,000) of their number as killed, though not without killing an equal number, if not more, of the enemy. Jai Singh, Dahir's son, finding further resistance useless, retired to Chitrur and Muhammad occupied the town with its treasure and other valuables, including Rani Ladi, another widow of Dahir, and

[10] Chach Nama in *Elliot and Dowson*, Vol. I, p. 170.
[11] *Ibid*, p. 172.

his maiden daughters, Surya Devi and Parmal Devi. The invader's next objective was Aror (also called Alor), the then capital of Sindh, held by another son of Dahir who stoutly defended the town and abandoned it only when further resistance proved to be of no avail. The subjugation of Sindh was now complete.

The conquest of Multan

Following up his extraordinary success in Sindh, Muhammad proceeded towards Multan early in 713 A.D. On his way from Aror he met everywhere with tough resistance; but his army, superior both in numbers and equipment, overcame it and, after having taken possession of a number of places, appeared before the gates of Multan. Like Debal and Brahmanabad, this ancient town fell through the betrayal of a traitorous deserter who revealed to the invader the stream from which the people drew their water supply and enabled him to cut it off from the besieged. Then followed the usual ghastly scene of slaughter, enslavement and loot. Here the Arabs got so much wealth that they named Multan as the city of gold.

Causes of the fall of Sindh

Many causes contributed to the subjugation of Sindh. In the first place, the province was internally disunited and unable to resist a mighty invader like the Arabs. Its population was sparse and heterogenous. Besides the Hindus, who formed the bulk of the population, a considerable number consisted of Buddhists, and a fraction probably of Jains too. The lower orders of the society were badly treated. The Jats, the Meds and certain other castes were looked down upon and subjected to humiliation by the ruler, the court and the official class no less than by the higher caste people. They were not allowed to ride on saddled horses, to carry arms or to put on fine clothes. Owing to these circumstances social solidarity, the best guarantee of political independence, was conspicuously lacking. In the second place, the ruler and his government were unpopular and also inefficient in war and probably also in peace. Only a generation before Muhammad bin Qasim's invasion the throne of Sindh had been usurped by the hated Chach. His son, Dahir, was equally disliked. In fact, there was little sympathy between the people and their king. Dahir's governors were almost semi-independent princes and did not seem to have co-operated with him in the time of crisis. Owing to these causes many of Dahir's subjects,

particularly the Buddhists and the traders, refused to fight on the plea that it was none of their business. Quite a considerable number of them supplied valuable information to the invader and joined him against their king and country. Mr. S. N. Dhar protests against what he calls making the Buddhists 'the knaves of the story'[12] but the Buddhist defection is based on recorded evidence, and facts must always have more weight than logic. Some of the Hindus, too, must share with the Buddhists the ignominy of treachery to their country, and the example was shamelessly set by a priest from the sacred temple of Debal. It is generally forgotten that, in spite of social tyranny within their own folds, the Hindus, long accustomed to religious tolerance, had developed a cosmopolitan attitude towards other faiths and peoples. Little did they reflect how Islam, which looks upon other religions as false and considers it to be its primary duty to put down idolatry, would treat them. Ignorant cosmopolitanism, combined with lack of patriotism, had produced a frame of mind in the generality of the Hindus that made little difference between their own countrymen and foreigners and induced the disgruntled among them to go over to the side of the enemy of their country. Defection and treachery were, without doubt, important causes of the fall of Sindh. Fourthly, Sindh was then, as now, an economically poor and a deficit province. Its meagre resources could not support a large standing army or finance a long war with a superior enemy. Fifthly, the Arab invading force was vastly superior to that of Dahir both in numbers and equipment, though not in the qualities of courage, daring and contempt of death. The garrison of 4,000 Sindhi troops, at Debal, had to face 25,000 Arabs, the flower of the Khalifa's army, and, with a disparity of one to six and a traitor supplying the besieger with every useful information, it was surprising that they could hold out for as many days as they actually did. Nirun, Sehwan and Sisam combined did not possess a quarter of the fighting strength of the army of invasion. There was something like parity in numbers, though not in equipment and enthusiasm (as the Arabs, on account of their repeated successes, were flushed with enthusiasm and our people, proportionately, dispirited and demoralized for the same reason), when the parties came face to face at Rawar. And this witnessed so tough a conflict

[12] S. N. Dhar, *The Arab Conquest of Sindh* (Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 1939), pp. 849-57.

that the enemy for a time seemed to have become despaired of success. The story of the Arab heroism and Muhammad bin Qasim's towering genius as well as of the cowardice of the Indian soldiers, so often related by interested writers, is now an exploded myth, thanks to the modern scientific research in our medieval history. It is worthy of note that the Arabs had been twice beaten by the Sindhi troops. Their eventual success was due to their superiority in numbers and equipment and to the want of proper leadership on the other side. Sixthly, Sindh was isolated from the rest of the country for a pretty long time. While it was overwhelmed by superior military force, it could not look to the rest of India for assistance. Our country was then divided into numerous independent states, each concerned with its own affairs, and with no central government or any other common organisation for the protection of their own frontiers. Seventhly, while the Arabs were spurred on to an adventurous and aggressive warfare by a firm, though misguided conviction that Divine Providence was pleased to use them as agents for forcing on the infidel people the blessings of Islam, our people possessed no such inspiring ideology to sustain their spirits in that fateful hour of their country's history. A curious irony of ignorant fate prevented them from facing hard facts and from realising that their religion and culture as well as homes and hearths were in imminent danger. Finally, Dahir's ignorance, initial lethargy and want of leadership and his silly mistakes furnished an adequate explanation of his defeat and the enslavement of Sindh. It was an unpardonable sin on the part of the governments of Sindh and the Punjab in particular not to have maintained touch with the great revolution in Arabia that created a mighty empire there in the seventh century A.D. and to have failed to make adequate arrangements for the defence of their frontiers after the Arab conquest of Makran (modern Baluchistan) which borders on, and is contiguous to, Sindh. Dahir did not raise his little finger and allowed Debal, Nirun, Sehwan, Sisam and several other places comprising the lower Sindh, to fall into the hand of the enemy. By a curious infatuation or folly he waited for the invader to arrive near Rawar and made no attempt to check his progress or to attack him while he lay for months on the other side of the Mihran almost paralysed by sickness that grievously affected his horses. He suffered Muhammad to cross the river without obstructing his passage. He staked his all on the

issue of one pitched battle. Instead of supervising his men in the field of battle as a general and leader and sending succour where necessary, he took a personal part as a soldier and lost touch with various divisions of his army. He expiated for his sin with his life, but not in the eyes of posterity, as he paved the way for his country's bondage.

THE ARAB ADMINISTRATION IN SINDH

Partial religious toleration conceded

Muhammad bin Qasim's first task, after the conquest of Debal, was to devise a rough and ready military administration for ensuring the possession of the town. He appointed a military officer as in-charge and stationed a garrison of 4,000 troops to work under his orders. This was repeated in every town, the strength of the garrison depending upon the population and strategic importance of the individual places. Confiscations, booty, plunder and extortions, all done by soldiery, sufficed to finance the war, as also the army of occupation. In this primitive administration he did not require the active co-operation of the people of the province. For this reason and in view of the mission with which the invasion was undertaken, Muhammad behaved in the hour of his victory and during his progress towards the capital town of Aror in the manner of a fanatical Musalman. Thousands of men were killed in cold blood for refusing to renounce their ancestral faith. Thousands of innocent women and children were deprived of their property and religion and reduced to servitude. Temples were everywhere destroyed and images desecrated and broken to pieces. Even such barbarous atrocities failed to satisfy Muhammad's immediate chief, Hajjaj, who, being a relentless persecutor, remonstrated against what he called slackness in doing the Lord's work, and directed him to deal with the infidels with greater severity. There is no doubt that Muhammad must have loyally carried out his chief's command. After the defeat and death of Dahir, however, when the Arabs became the masters of almost the entire province and Muhammad was faced with an immediate necessity of establishing sound and durable administration, he felt compelled to choose between religious bigotry and political wisdom. It was physically impossible for a handful of the Arabs to take upon themselves all the work relating to the various branches of administration and to compel the natives to till the soil and to provide them with food and revenue. In the first place, the Arab

number was small. Secondly, they were ignorant of Indian administration, revenue rules and regulations and principles of jurisprudence, etc. Thirdly, the Hindus were intensely devoted to their religion and, deeply conscious of the superiority of their faith and culture, looked down upon the conquerors as nothing more than masterful barbarians. They preferred death to Islam. Fourthly, the Hindus were armed to the teeth and in those days there was little difference in the equipment and quality of a regular soldier and the common people. An organised attempt at proselytisation would have meant a perpetual war and defeated the very object of the conquest. On the other hand, Islam, as interpreted by Muslim jurists and commentators of the Quran, granted toleration only to the Jews and the Christians, but not to the Hindus. The law of Islam divided the non-Muslims into two groups. The first group known as the *Ahl-i-Kitab* (People of the Book), who were believed to be sharers in Revelation, were the Hebrews and the Christians and were entitled to toleration on payment of the jizya. The second group was, according to them, of those who did not possess the Revealed Book and hence they were not entitled to toleration. The Hindus belonged to the second category. They laid down that for the Hindus there was to be no choice between conversion to Islam and death. Muhammad bin Qasim was, therefore, faced with a dilemma and did not know what to do. Under the circumstances the only practical solution of the problem was a kind of compromise that could extend to the Hindus and the Buddhists of Sindh a partial toleration granted to the Jews and the Christians. Muhammad bin Qasim accepted this compromise. The Hindus were, therefore, asked to pay the jizya or Poll Tax and were allowed to retain their religion and worship their God in an inoffensive manner and without parade. They became known as the *Zimmis* (protected people), as the Hebrews and the Christians were known. This was obviously a concession which had been unknown to the Islamic law (*Shariat*) and opened up a new chapter in the history of Islam. That accounts for Sir William Muir's observation that the Arab conquest of Sindh marked a new stage in Muslim policy. Muhammad bin Qasim's decision to grant partial religious tolerance to the Hindus in Sindh was a very important act. This became a kind of fundamental law for subsequent Muslim rulers of the land. It must, however, be understood that the partial toleration given was not due to generosity but to peculiar circumstances

as all the Hindus could not be put to death or forcibly converted. Moreover, they were not accorded equal rights of citizenship with those of them who had embraced Islam. They were required to pay the jizya which was a religious tax and meant to show that they were an inferior people. Various other disabilities were imposed upon them. Inspite of these, Muhammad succeeded in winning the Hindu co-operation and thus solving his novel problem.

Political divisions and their government

After the above fateful decision, which gave the fundamentals of Islamic administration in India, Muhammad bin Qasim proceeded to lay down the general principles of administration. He divided the conquered province into a number of districts (*iqtas*), at the head of each of which an Arab military officer was appointed. The new district officers were required to render military service to the governor and were given a great deal of latitude in local administration. Sub-divisions of the district must have been allowed to remain intact with their local Hindu officers. Soldiers were given land in jagir. Muslim saints and scholars were similarly given endowments of land. Thus a number of Arab military colonies came into existence. The local administration, specially in the rural areas, remained completely in the hands of our people. The old principles and rules and regulations continued as before. If the Arabs made any change they were confined to the capital and the district towns only.

The revenue system

The conquerors introduced little change in the revenue administration of the province. The principles for the assessment and collection of revenues remained the same as in the time of Dahir. Only one or two new taxes were imposed. The most important among these was the jizya. The land revenue varied between 2/5 and 1/4 of the produce of the soil. Besides these two taxes there were a number of others, and all these were farmed out to the highest bidder.

Justice

The administration of justice was haphazard. There was no well-organised hierarchy of courts, nor was there the uniformity of law administered in these courts. The district officers took cognizance of crimes committed within their respective jurisdictions. Similarly, the nobles decided cases in their estates. There

was, without doubt, a *Qazi* at the capital and *Qazis* in all important towns. They decided cases according to the Islamic law, even though one of the parties might be a Hindu. Punishments were very severe for the Hindus. For example, theft committed by them was punished by burning them to death, in some cases including even the members of the culprit's family. As far as the Hindus themselves were concerned, they decided their own cases. They had their *Panchayats* in which disputes relating to marriage, inheritance, social and moral matters were decided.

Religious policy

Except in the beginning, the Arab religious policy in Sindh was one of partial toleration. The Hindus were allowed to worship their gods in their temples and in their homes. They were, however, required to pay the jizya. Some of the modern writers have called this tax a military tax charged from the Hindus for they were not required to render military service while the Muslims, who were required to render such service, were free from it. This view is erroneous, for the tax was charged from all the Hindus whether they rendered military service to the State or not. It was a religious tax. It was levied according to three grades into which the non-Muslim population was divided. The charge for the first grade was silver equal to 48 *dirhams*, for the second grade 24 *dirhams* and for the third grade 12 *dirhams*.

Hard lot of the common people

The Arab administration did not prove an improvement upon that of Dahir so far as the lower classes of the people were concerned. There was no change in the treatment meted out to some of the tribes such as the Jats and the Meds. The members of these tribes were required to bring a dog when they came to pay their respects to the governor. They were forbidden to wear fine dresses, to ride on horses and to cover their head and feet. They were required to be branded on their hand. They were made to submit too many other humiliations. The people were required to feed every Muslim traveller for three days and nights. The common people must have, therefore, chafed under the Arab rule. It must, however, be admitted, in fairness to the Arabs, that their administration, on the whole, was more mild than that of the Turks who were to follow them as conquerors in the eleventh century A.D.

The death of Muhammad bin Qasim

After these outstanding achievements the conqueror of Sindh met his tragic end in the prime of his life in 715 or 716 A.D. Two different causes are given about Muhammad bin Qasim's death. The first reads like a romantic tale. It says that when the two daughters of Dahir, Surya Devi and Parmal Devi, were presented to the Khalifa Walid they informed him that Muhammad had dishonoured them before sending them to him. The infuriated Khalifa, thereupon, ordered that the offender should be sewn up in the raw hide of an ox and thus carried to his capital. Muhammad immediately obeyed the order and died within three days. When the box was opened in the presence of the Khalifa the two ladies expressed satisfaction at having avenged the death of their father and told the Khalifa that Muhammad was innocent. Walid was transported into a rage and ordered the two princesses to be tied to the tails of horses and dragged until they were dead. Modern research has rejected this story as a later concoction. The other account, which ascribes Muhammad's death to political reasons, is more worthy of credence. On Khalifa Walid's death in 714 A.D. his brother, Sulaiman, succeeded him. The new Khalifa was an arch enemy of Hajjaj on whose family and relations he inflicted ruinous punishments. Muhammad, who was a cousin and son-in-law of Hajjaj, was dismissed from Sindh and sent a prisoner to Mesopotamia where he was soon after tortured to death.

Causes of the eventual Arab failure in Sindh

The provinces of Sindh and Multan remained parts of the Khalifa's wide empire a little over 150 years, after which they severed their connections with the Caliphate. Even during that period the Arab rule witnessed a gradual decline. Governor was appointed to succeed governor. The inefficiency and weakness of the administration continued as before. Under an energetic governor there was a temporary activity and sometimes an expedition was undertaken against the neighbouring Hindu kingdoms, but this was followed by relapse into sloth and lethargy. Under Umar II, who became Khalifa in 717 A.D., an intense religious propaganda was launched. Many Hindu chiefs, notably Jai Singh, son of Dahir and ruler of Brahmanabad, were compelled to renounce their ancestral faith and become converts to Islam. The energetic governor named Junaid carried the Arab arms into the heart of Kutch, but

the expedition was a mere raid and not a war of conquest. Eventually the Arabs found their influence languishing and were obliged to build two strongholds for their protection. They were *al-Mahfuzah*, 'the guarded', and *Mansura*, a few miles to the north-east of Brahmanabad. In 750 A.D. there was a revolution in Damascus as a result of which the Umayyaids were overthrown and a new Caliphate was established at Baghdad under Abbasid Khalifa. The quarrel between these two houses affected Sindh badly. The Abbasid Caliphs sent their own officers to Sindh with orders to expel the Umayyaid governor and officers. The result was a long and bitter quarrel which undermined the already waning prestige of the Arabs in that province. After this date the governors and chiefs of Sindh became more or less semi-independent rulers. In 871 A.D. Sindh cut off its relations with the Caliph and declared its independence in fact, though not in name. Two local Arab chiefs established themselves at Multan and Mansura which became, for all practical purposes, independent kingdoms. The kingdom of Multan comprised the upper valley of the Indus as far as Aror, while that of Mansura embraced Sindh proper. The rulers of these dynasties associated the natives with the administration and granted toleration to the Hindus and the Buddhists.

The late Stanely Lane-poole expressed the opinion that the Arab conquest of Sindh was "an episode in the history of India and Islam, a triumph without results." This has been accepted as correct by many writers of Indian history. The history of the Arabs in Sindh, according to them, shows that the Arab adventure "led to nothing." The province, of course, remained in their hands till its conquest and annexation by the Turks; but the Arabs, who had a glorious record of conquest elsewhere, never succeeded in making a concentrated effort to conquer any other province, to say nothing of a major portion of our country. /They had, no doubt, made a promising beginning, but their success, whatever it was, did not lead them beyond the frontiers of Sindh and Multan,/ except for a stray raid here and there. Hence the verdict of historians that the Arab conquest of Sindh was a mere episode in the history of Islam. /As far as India was concerned, it learnt no lesson,/ and our people did not pause to consider the necessity of making a combined attempt to drive away the Arab invader from Sindh, nor did /they make any attempt to close their ranks and to guard their north-western frontier from any

future danger from that side. They were found as unprepared and as indifferent to the happenings outside three centuries later when the Turks began hammering the gates of their frontiers as in the early years of the eighth century A.D. when Muhammad bin Qasim took Dahir by surprise. It is for this reason that the Arab conquest of Sindh is an episode in the history of India.) Historians have attributed the impermanence of the Arab regime to many causes.) They can conveniently be divided into two, namely, internal causes and external causes. Among the internal causes the most important was the internal weakness of the Khalifa's empire. As has already been shown, a revolution at Damascus in 750 A.D. led to the overthrow of the Umayyaids by the Abbasids which greatly weakened the power and prestige of the Caliphate. The quarrel between the two ruling houses was carried into Sindh and dealt a mortal blow to the Arab prestige there. Secondly, in the wake of this revolution there occurred a still greater revolution in Baghdad which transformed the character and mode of life of the Arabs. Under Harun-al-Rashid the Arabs forgot their old vigour and "lost touch with everything original and vital in Islam." They became fond of a luxurious way of life and preferred speculative philosophy to the "Quranic orthodoxy and Arabian simplicity." This led to their eventual demoralization, making the Arabs unfit for any great military exploit or for an adventure in the field of administration. Thirdly, a wave of nationalism swept over the Muslim world and rent the primitive Islamic brotherhood into factions. Religious schism, too, raised its head high. A number of heretical sects appeared on the scene. Fourthly, under the religious impulse the Arabs had accomplished the conquest of Sindh. After their success, however, when they had consolidated their position in the province and their religious enthusiasm died out, their unity disappeared and they showed themselves incapable of coalescing into a system of concord and subordination. Fifthly, the Arab domination received a rude shock at the hands of the Turkish ambition which usurped power and reduced the Khalifa's empire to a mere phantom. Under these circumstances the Arab rulers could take little interest in the fortunes of their agents in Sindh. Sixthly, owing to these internal convulsions the Arabs could not spare adequate forces without which Sindh could not be retained in their possession and further conquests in India were unthinkable.

Among the external causes mention may be made of the presence of powerful Rajput kingdoms, particularly those on the north and the east. The Rajput dynasties, which ruled over these parts of the country, were more than a match for the Arabs and they were prepared to contest every inch of the ground against foreign encroachment. In the second place, there existed throughout India a powerful Hindu priesthood which exercised an irresistible influence over the people and was deadly opposed to foreign ways of life and thought. The generality of the Hindus, under the influence of this priestly class, considered themselves and their culture greatly superior to that of the Arabs, who were, in their eyes, nothing more than unclean barbarians. Thirdly, Sindh was then, as now, almost a desert land and its financial resources were inadequate to meet the expenditure of a top-heavy administration. It was, therefore, financially a deficit province and was an unremunerative part of the Caliphate. The Arabs of Sindh, left to their own resources, found themselves powerless against their richer neighbours. Finally, Sindh is situated in the wrong corner of India and it does not offer a geographical key to the rest of the country. It was not possible for any power starting from Sindh and making that as the base of its operations to succeed in conquering the rest of India.

The effects of the Arab conquest

From the political point of view the Arab conquest of Sindh was an insignificant event in the history of Islam and also in that of India. Nor did it permanently influence the language, art, traditions, customs and manners of our people. In fact, the Arabs left few memorials in the shape of buildings or administrative or cultural institutions that might have exerted influence on us or served as memorial of their rule. There is, however, the other side of the picture. It will be a mistake to suppose that the Arab adventure produced no effect whatever on our countrymen. The Arab conquest of Sindh was destined to sow the seed of Islam in this land. A considerable portion of the population of the province was compelled to abandon its ancestral religion and become convert to Islam. The new religion, foreign in its doctrines and ways of life, thus acquired a footing which proved to be permanent. It became the endeavour of future invaders from the north-west to help this religion to expand and flourish and to exploit the presence and sympathy of the Indian converts. This became the first of a series

of fateful events which eventually led to the partition of our country and the establishment of Pakistan in 1947.

The Arabs themselves were profoundly affected by the contact with our religion, culture and people. They were astonished at the superiority of the Hindu civilisation, the Hindu philosophical thought and ideals and the versatility of the Hindu intellect. They learnt many things from us, specially the practical art of administration, and astronomy, music, painting, medicine and architecture.[13] The Barmakis, a family of Buddhists (probably of Indian origin) who were in charge of No Bahar (*Nav Vihar*), a Buddhist temple at Balkh, became prime ministers of the Abhasid Caliphs (Saffah, Mansur and Harun-al-Rashid) after their conversion to Islam and dominated the Baghdad court for about fifty years (753-802 A.D.). They were responsible for inviting Indian scholars and scientists, physicians, astrologers and mathematicians, from Sindh to Baghdad in 771 A.D. Other missions followed, and Indian scientists like Bhāla, Mānaka, Bazigar (Bijayakar ?) and Sindbad acquired great fame at the Caliph's capital and were frequently mentioned in Arabic works. Mānaka, a physician, cured the Caliph Harun-al-Rashid of a serious disease and Dhana was appointed chief medical officer of a hospital at Baghdad. Indian scholars transmitted to the Arab world their knowledge of mathematics, astronomy, astrology, medicine and surgery.[14] The Arabs adopted the Indian numerals and had some of the important Sanskrit works, such as *Brahmasiddhanta* of Brahmagupta and his *Khanda Khandyaka* translated into Arabic with the help of Hindu scholars. They employed Indian masons and painters to build and decorate their mosques and palaces. The Arabic civilisation was, thus, greatly enriched by its contact with our land. The Arabs carried Indian philosophy, numerals, astronomy and other branches of knowledge to Europe.[15] Much of the enlightenment of the early Europeans of the eighth and the ninth centuries A.D. was, therefore, due to the Arab contact with India.

13 *Al Beruni's India*, translated by Sachau, p. xxxi.
14 *Al Arab*, Vol. I, No. 8 (15th January, 1962).
15 Havell, *Aryan Rule in India*, p. 256.

3

HINDU AFGHANISTAN : ITS CONQUEST AND OCCUPATION BY THE TURKS

Afghanistan[1] under Hindu rule, c. 430-870 A.D.

There were three Hindu kingdoms on the north-western borderland of India in the 7th century A.D., when the Arabs, inspired by the teachings of Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, and conscious of their new unity and strength, were embarking on a career of world conquest. These were, besides Sindh, the kingdoms of Kabul or Kia-pi-shi (Kapisha), Zabul (Jabala) or Zabulistan. On account of their geographical situation they were the first among the Indian powers to face the brunt of the Arab aggression and onslaught. The kingdom of Kabul was situated in and comprised the valley of the river Kabul (Kubha) and extended as far North as the Hindukush (Upari-syena or Paraponissus) mountains. A Hindu dynasty known as Shahi (Turki-Shahi) held sway over this region from about the middle of the fifth century A.D. In 630 A.D. the famous Chinese pilgrim Yuan Chwang (Hiuen Tsiang) found an able and shrewd king of Kshatriya caste ruling over this extensive kingdom which was more than 4000 li in circuit[2] and included in the East Laghman (Lamghan), Jalalabad district (Nagarhara), Peshawar, Charsadda and Und on the Indus (Gandhara region) ; and in the South the territory on both the banks of the river Gomal or ancient Gomati (Varana), the district of Bannu and probably the principality of Ghazna (Hosi-na) also. In the north-east it touched the boundary of Kashmir and in the west that of Iran. The Kshatriya king belonged to a dynasty founded by Barhatakin[3] who had established his authority in the Kabul valley about 430 A.D. Yuan Chwang's contemporary on the throne of Kabul was powerful enough to bring under his control ten independent principalities prominent among which were Laghman, Jalalabad and Peshawer. The king was a Buddhist and the people

1 Afghanistan was originally called *Asvakayana* (Sanskrit), *Assakenoi* (Greek).
2 Thomas Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India,* Vol. I, p. 122.
3 *Kitab-ul-Hind* of Al Beruni (Eng. Trans. by Sachau), Vol. II, pp. 10-15.

were Hindus, Jains and Buddhists. The country was full of Buddhist monasteries.[4]

The kingdom of Zabul (Jabala) lay south of that of Kabul and just north of modern Baluchistan (Pardayane or Gedrosia) and comprised the upper valley of the Helmand (Setumant or Haetumanet) river, including an extensive territory to the east and west of that valley. Most probably Seistan (Sijistan=Sakasthan), with its capital Zarang, which lay on the lake Zarah, formed part of this kingdom. Its king was a Hindu and bore the title of Shah or Shahya. "In the seventh century A.D. these two kingdoms formed parts of India both politically and culturally being Indian in language, literature and religion, and ruled over by kings who bore Indian names."[5]

The Arabs fail to conquer Afghanistan

The Arabs had conquered and occupied Iran by 643 A.D., and pushed the frontier of the Caliphate to the western border of the Hindu kingdoms of Kabul and Zabul.[6] Fired as they were by a resolute ambition for world conquest and for uprooting idolatry in the neighbouring land, it is likely that they must have launched an attack on the Kabul territory as early as 643 A.D. Certain it is that in 650 A.D. (30 A.H.) the Arabs made a determined attempt to conquer the Kabul valley. That year Ar-Rabi ibn Ziyad was directed by the Arab general Abdulla bin Amir, governor of Basra, to subdue Seistan, which was then a province of the Hindu kingdom[7] and was administered by an officer of the Indian ruler. Ar-Rabi appeared before Zarang, the capital of Seistan, which lay on lake Zarah. He met with a fierce resistance and many Arabs were badly wounded. But he managed to inflict a defeat on the governor of Seistan and to proceed as far as Bust. He was, however, soon driven out, losing everything he had gained.[8] In 653 A.D. Ibn Amir appointed Abdar Rahmna as governor of Seistan which had yet to be conquered. This officer occupied a part of Seistan, though not without resistance, and forced a contribution of twenty lakhs of dirhams from the Satrap

4 *Life of Hiuen Tsiang* by S. Beal, pp. 54-72 and 192-95; Thomas Watters, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 122-23 and 180-285; Vol. II, pp. 264-66.
5 R. C. Majumdar, *The Classical Age*, p. 165.
6 Philip K. Hitti, *The Arabs* (1948), p. 50.
7 Seistan or Sijistan which lay to the south-west of the country, now known as Afghanistan, was a province either of Kabul or of Zabul.
8 Biladuri, *Kitab Futuh-al-Buldan* (Eng. Trans. by Hitti and Murgotten), Part II, pp. 141-43.

(governor of Seistan). "He went into the temple of the Zur, an idol of gold with two rubies for eyes, and cut off a hand and took out the rubies. Then he said to the Satrap, "Keep the gold and gems. I only wanted to show you that it had no power to harm or help."[9] After this success Abdár Rahman obtained control over Bust on the Helmand, and proceeded to Kabul. But his successor Umair was driven out and the country as far as Zarang reverted to the Hindu rule. In the reign of Muawiya (661-680 A.D.) Abdar Rahman was again appointed governor of Seistan, and he defeated the king of Kabul and captured the city. He also wrested Bust and Rukhkhaj from Zabul. But after his recall the rulers of Kabul and Zabul again drove away the Arabs from their countries and the new Arab governor had to conclude a treaty by which a sum of money was paid to him probably in return for a promise not to invade the Indian territories again. In 683 A.D. the people of Kabul broke the agreement and imprisoned Abu Ubaida ibn Ziyad. Yazid ibn Ziyad, the governor of Seistan, who attempted retribution, was defeated and killed in the battle of Junzah and his army was completely routed and put to flight with great slaughter. The result was that the Arabs once again lost Seistan, and had to pay to the Hindus five lakhs of dirhams as ransom for the release of Abu Ubaida. But there was no abatement in the Arab zeal for conquest, and soon after 683 A.D. they recovered ground in Seistan. The Hindu ruler of Zabul who offered a valiant resistance to the Arab expansion was killed in a battle. Nevertheless the war continued, for his son refused to give up the struggle. In 692 A.D. Abdullah, the new governor of Seistan, penetrated into the interior of the country. The Hindu resistance, however, obliged him to bind himself in writing not to raid, burn or lay waste the Ratbil's country as long as he was governor. The Caliph Abdal Malik (685-705 A.D.) did not approve of the treaty and dismissed Abdullah.[10]

During al-Hajjaj's governorship of Iraq (696-713 A.D.) Ubaidullah, who was sent to Seistan, advanced to a mountainous path in the neighbourhood of Kabul, but his passage was blocked by the Hindus of the land, and he had to retreat, leaving his three sons as hostages in the hands of the king of Kabul. This humiliating treaty caused a split among the Arabs and one of their commanders, named

[9] *Ibid*, Part II, p. 144.
[10] Biladuri, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-50.

Shuraih, renewed the war. But he was badly defeated and killed and his troops had to beat a retreat to Bust, many perishing of thirst and hunger. Ubaidullah died of grief. To wipe off this disgrace a very powerful force was raised and a special war-cess was levied from Basra and Kufa to equip it. In 699 A.D. it was despatched under Abdur Rahman to take the field against the king of Kabul. But even Abdur Rahman failed to conquer the Hindu kingdom, and the fiery Hajjaj was now obliged to make peace with the king of Kabul, agreeing not to make war for seven (according to another authority, for nine) years on the condition of being paid a tribute of nine lakhs of dirhams in kind. An unsuccessful attempt was made in 710 A.D. to compel the king of Kabul by force of arms to pay the subsidy in coined money. On Hajjaj's death in 714 A.D. the Hindu king refused to pay the tribute. During the reign of Caliph Sulaiman (715-717 A.D.) the ruler of Kabul paid no tribute whatever. The Abbasids who replaced the Umayyaid dynasty 749 A.D. tried to revive the glory of the Caliphate and to conquer Kabul and Zabul. Caliph al-Mansur (754-775 A.D.), the second ruler of this dynasty, conquered Kandhar and made a serious attempt to realise the tribute from Zabul, but although the Arabs recovered control over ar-Rakhkhaj, they failed to establish their firm hold even on Seistan.[11] The Arabs continued making attempts periodically to subdue Kabul and Zabul and to compel their rulers to pay them tribute, but these attempts did not achieve any great measure of success. Thus the Hindus of Afghanistan defied the arms of the mighty Caliphate for two hundred and twenty years and retained their practical independence inspite of the repeated onslaughts of the conquerors of the world.

Turkish conquest of Afghanistan

What the greatest empire of the medieval world failed to do was achieved by the ruler of a petty principality, Yaqub ibn Layth, who started his career as a brigand in Seistan and rose to be the founder of the Saffarid dynasty of Persia and the neighbouring territories that lay to the west and south-west of the Hindu kingdoms of Kabul and Zabul, thanks to the internal dissension among the ruling party in Kabul and the successful use of downright treachery by the invader against his unsuspecting Hindu neighbour. In 870 A.D. Legaturman, destined to be the last Kshatriya ruler of Kabul,

[11] Biladuri, *op. cit.*, Part II, pp. 139-55 ; Appendix : Note A, entitled 'The Hindu Kings of Kabul' in *Elliot and Dowson*, Vol. II (2nd edition), pp. 401-28.

was overthrown by his Brahman minister, Lallya *alias* Kallar, who, though credited by Kalhan, the author of Rajtarangini, with ability and strength, was defeated and driven out of Kabul by Yaqub ibn Layth within a year of his usurpation. During an invasion of the Zabul territory Yaqub sent a message that he would submit to the Hindu king and should be permitted to do him homage along with his troops, for otherwise the latter would disperse and prove dangerous to both of them. Yaqub's troops "carried their lances concealed behind their horses and wearing coats of mail under their garments. The Almighty made the army of Rusal (Ratbil ?) blind, so that they did not see the lances. When Yaqub drew near Rusal, he bowed his head as if to do homage, but he raised the lance and thrust it into the back of Rusal, so that he died on the spot. His people also fell like lightning upon the enemy, cutting them down with their swords and staining the earth with the blood of the enemies of religion. The infidels, when they saw the head of Rusal upon the point of a spear, took to flight and great bloodshed ensued... This victory which he achieved was the result of treachery and deception, such as no one had ever committed."[12] Lallya's position seems to have become untenable after the above disaster, and he abandoned Kabul and shifted his capital to Udbhand (the modern village of Und) on the right bank of the Indus, 15 miles above Attock in Rawalpindi district. This happened[13] in 870 A.D. (256 A.H.), and the Hindu rule ended in Afghanistan once for all.[14]

12 *Jami-ul-Hikayat* of Nur-ud-din Muhammad Ufi in *Elliot and Dowson*, Vol. II (2nd Edition), pp. 176-77.

13 *Elliot and Dowson*, Vol. II (2nd Edition), p. 419; *The Arab Conquests in Central Asia* by M.A.B. Gibb, p. 15.

14 Dr. H.C. Ray was the first Indian scholar to attempt a systematic account of the Hindu rule in Afghanistan (vide *Dynastic History of India*, Vol. I, Chapter II). But historical research has made rapid progress since the publication of his book, necessitating a fresh study of the subject.

4

CAUSES OF THE FALL OF THE HINDU STATES IN EARLY MEDIEVAL AGE

The history of the resistance offered by the Hindu States of north-western India against the mighty Arab and Turkish invaders from Central Asia and of the causes of their eventual fall has not yet been studied in correct perspective. No modern writer has made a scientific study to analyse on a comprehensive basis the causes of our final defeat and loss of independence at the hands of the Islamic races from the north-west. Owing to our eventual failure to stem the tide of Islamic invasions, it has been presumed that our political, social and military organisations must have been rotten to crumble at the touch of the virile invading forces. Modern European writers have sedulously built up the theory that as a race the Hindus were and are inferior in fighting qualities to the Central Asian Arabs, Turks and other Islamic peoples, and this in their opinion was the principal cause of the downfall of the Hindu States in medieval age. Lane-Poole, for example, remarks, "To the contrast of union and disunion, north and south, race and climate, was added the zeal of the Moslem and the greed of the robber."[1] Vincent A. Smith, an equally acknowledged authority, writes that the invaders were superior fighters, as they came from the cold climate of the north, were eaters of meat and were inured to warfare.[2] This theory is based on an uncritical acceptance of the probably biased accounts of medieval Muslim writers, so prone to magnify the exploits of their compatriots and minimise those of their adversaries, and seems to give an undue consideration to the later debacle of the times of Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad of Ghur utterly ignoring the earlier three and a half centuries' magnificent resistance offered by the Hindus of Sindh, Afghanistan and the Panjab. And a debacle, it must not be forgotten, was inevitable in the wake of demoralisation that set in as a result of three hundred and fifty years' (636 A.D.-997 A.D.) warfare and confusion against a succession of ever-recurring fresh waves of invaders.

1 Stanley Lane-Poole, *Medieval India.*
2 V. A. Smith, *The Oxford History of India.*

How fallacious the theory is, can be seen from the fact that the Arabs, who were the first among the Islamic races to conquer an Indian province, Sindh, were the conquerors of many countries of Asia, Africa and Europe which included Egypt and other countries of North Africa and Portugal, Spain and the southern half of France—countries situated in the colder regions far north of Arabia, the inhabitants of which were as much, if not more, eaters of meat and accustomed to warfare. It is also worthy of note that the Arabs completely vanquished the most ferocious races of Central Asia, such as the Mongols, Uzbeks and the Turks—the ancestors of heaven-born generals like Changiz Khan and Timur—races that were reckoned for centuries the best fighters in the whole of Asia and far superior to the Arabs in military qualities, horsemanship and ferocity. It was these Turks who after their conversion to Islam succeeded in conquering the Hindu kingdoms of Kabul and Zabul in Afghanistan and the kingdom of the Panjab which the Arabs had failed to subdue. A section of these very Turks, known as the Ottoman Turks, conquered in the fifteenth century the Eastern Roman Empire with its capital Constantinople and all the countries of the Balkan peninsula in Eastern Europe and threatened Vienna, the capital of Austria. These Eastern people dominated south-eastern Europe for over two hundred years, and inspite of more than three centuries' best efforts on the part of some of the powerful European nations, they could not be driven out of Europe. And today the descendants of the world conquerors of the 7th and 8th centuries A.D. are at the mercy of a less virile race, a handful of Jews of the tiny Israel, surrounded though it is by the very people who carried the message of prophet Muhammad to three continents of the world. In this country the short-sized Marathas, who were despised in northern India in the time of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb (17th century), became an object of terror to the proud, tall and well-built Mughals and ferocious Pathans so much so that Muslim chroniclers of the 18th and 19th centuries, like Ghulam Ali, Murtaza Husain and others not only paid tribute to Maratha daring but also openly avowed that ten Maratha soldiers were more than a match for twenty Pathan stalwarts. Examples can be multiplied, but these are enough to demolish the theory of race superiority and the belief that military talent is measured in terms of size and bulk. Moreover, the Indian soldier has been superb through the ages. In the World War I and II he fought in many theatres in

Asia, Africa and Europe and not only covered himself with glory but elicited unstinted praise from European commanders and statesmen who saw his exploits. His ancestors of the medieval age, who were free and fought for a national cause, could not have been inferior.

In the second place, if seen in the context of the contemporary world history, it would be realised that no people in any part of the world offered such a prolonged and tough and successful resistance to the aggression of the Arabs and the Turks as did the Hindus of the medieval age. Whereas many countries of Asia, Africa and Europe succumbed to the Arab onslaught, each after a few years' resistance, Sindh yielded only after nearly seventy-five years' struggle, Hindu Afghanistan fought for two hundred and twenty years and the Panjab for one hundred and fifty-six years. For example, Syria, which was the first country to face the Arab aggression, fell within a year (635-636 A.D.) and after the surrender of Damascus, its capital, "other towns fell like ninepins before the conquerors."[3] Iraq fell without fighting[4] in 637 A.D. The whole of the mighty Persian Empire was annexed within five years of the famous battle of Cadesia fought in 1637 A.D., that is, it was conquered in "about a decade,"[5] in all. The year 643 A.D. brought the Arabs to the borders of India.[6] A whirl-wind campaign led to the conquest of the entire Central Asia, inhabited by the ferocious Turks, Turkomans, Uzbeks and Mongols, in eight years (642-650 A.D.). All the countries of North Africa were conquered and occupied between 639 and 709 A.D. In the ancient land of Egypt the story was the same as elsewhere—a rout, a siege and the cry of victory. Babylon was taken in this manner, and Alexandria was captured within a year.[7] In 711 A.D. Tariq, the Berber general of Musa, landed at Gibralter and on July 19 of the same year defeated Roderick, king of Spain, who disappeared altogether. "After this decisive victory the march of the Moslems through Spain almost amounted to a promenadet."[8] Within the short space of seven years the conquest of the (Iberian) peninsula, one of the fairest and largest provinces of medieval Europe, was effected. "The conquerors were there to stay—for centuries at least."[9] In about a dozen years' spasmodic operations the southern half of France was subdued. The

3 Philip K. Hitti, *The Arabs*, p. 49.
4 *Ibid.*
5 *Ibid*, p. 50.
6 *Ibid.*
7 *Ibid*, p. 52.
8 *Ibid*, p. 65.
9 *Ibid*, p. 67.

Arab expansion in Europe received its first check at the battle of Tours and Poiters where the Muslim leader Abdar Rahman was defeated by Charles the Martel in October 732 A.D.[10]

Thirdly, the value and extent of the success of the Indian resistance against the Muslim invaders can be appreciated from the fact that whereas the Arabs, and to a lesser degree the Turks, completely exterminated the religion, the culture and the way of life of the peoples whom they subjugated, they failed in absorbing us and blotting out our religion and culture or even in bringing about a break between us and our ancestors. In fact, we influenced the Muslim invaders more than they influenced us. Titus is right when he says, "Hinduism has wrought a far greater change in Islam than Islam has wrought in Hinduism which still continues to pursue the even tenor of its way with a complacency and confidence that are amazing."[11]

Fourthly, even after the fall of Sindh and Hindu Afghanistan which opened the flood gates of, first, the Arab and then the Turkish invasions, the Arabs failed to conquer permanently an inch of our territory beyond Sindh and Multan and the Turks had to put up one hundred and fifty years' (870-1026 A.D.) fighting before they could conquer and occupy the Panjab. Counting from 1175, the year of the first invasion of Muhammad of Ghur, to the death of Ala-ud-din Khalji (1316), it took the Turks another century and a half to conquer Northern India minus Kashmir, and Assam and Orissa, and even then the conquest was not effective, many patches of extensive territories remaining interspersed here and there. It is a matter of common knowledge that Rajasthan was never effectually conquered in the medieval age, and that throughout the Sultanate period (1206-1526) annual expeditions had to be undertaken into the Doab, the region between the Ganga and the Yamuna, to collect tribute from the zamindars.[12]

The causes of our defeat must, therefore, be sought somewhere else. A nation's greatest enemy, says Sir Jadunath Sarkar, the doyen of Indian historians, is within, not without. Internal factors consequently take the first place. Unfortunately, north-western India, including Hindu Afghanistan and part of Sindh, was even

[10] Philip K. Hitti, *The Arabs*, p. 71.
[11] Titus, *Indian Islam*.
[12] Minhaj-us-Siraj, *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*; Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi*; *Elliot and Dowson*, Vols. II-IV.

before the 7th century A.D. isolated from the rest of the country, as the parts beyond the Indus were looked upon by the conservative elements of our society as 'border-lands' inhabited by 'barbarians'.[13] There was in those regions, particularly in Afghanistan, a great intermixture of races, and Indo-Greeks, Indo-Parthians, Kushans and Huns, who in course of time embraced Hinduism and had become one with the native Hindu population. This being repugnant to the rising conservatism in the country, the rest of India took little interest in the affairs of these people who could expect no help or sympathy from their countrymen and had to depend upon themselves and face the enemy single-handed. Secondly, after the extinction of the Mauryan Empire there was no such thing as the defence of the frontiers of India by the united might and resources of the Indian people, because our north-west frontiers and all other frontiers were the frontiers of small independent kingdoms. There was no central government for the whole of India or even for the whole of Northern India, which could think and act for the country as a whole. The kingdoms of Sindh, Kabul and Zabul, though ruled by brave monarchs and inhabited by warlike people, encountered superior forces backed by the might and resources of the biggest and most powerful empire of the age, with their slender manpower and financial strength. The other Indian states were interested in these wars as their neighbours' wars and not their own. Obviously, Hindu Afghanistan or Sindh could not under these circumstances carry on an unequal contest for an indefinitely long period.

Thirdly, the country during the period experienced a Brahmanical reaction that produced three-fold effects on its fortune. In the first place, under the stress of this movement Brahman ministers overthrew their Kshatriya and Sudra masters, usurped their thrones and set themselves up as rulers, which brought about a kind of political revolution and instability. Lallya (also known as Kallar), the Brahman minister of the Kshatriya king Lagaturman of Kabul, deposed and imprisoned his sovereign and seized his kingdom in 870 A.D. (256 A.H.) at a time when his country was faced with a first class external crisis on account of the aggressions of Saffarid Yaqub ibn Layth.[14] Within a year of his usurpation Lallya was driven out of Kabul by Yaqub, and Afghanistan, which had for

[13] Thomas Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, Vol. I, p. 180.
[14] *Kitab-ul-Hind* of Al Beruni (English trans. by Sachau), Vol. II, pp. 10-13.

centuries been the north-western part of India, was lost once for all. In Sindh, while the Arab raids were in progress, the Brahman minister Chach deposed and slew his Sudra master Sahasi Rai II, married his widowed queen and set himself up as ruler[15] about 700 A.D. Chach's son Dahir had to pay the price of his father's usurpation. In 712 A.D. he was defeated and killed by the Arab general Muhammad bin Qasim and Sindh was for ever lost to Hindu India. In the second place, the rise of orthodox Hinduism alienated the Buddhist population in the country and quite a large number of them, at least in Sindh, not only became indifferent towards the ruling family but even went over to the side of the Arab invaders and rendered them material assistance against their king and country.[16]

Moreover, inasmuch as religious orthodoxy and ritualism run counter to the simplicity of the poor, the lower orders of our society felt a widening gulf between them and their new rulers who pursued a suicidal policy of social and religious exclusion. The Jats and Meds in Sindh felt so much oppressed that liké Buddhists they joined Muhammad bin Qasim against Dahir. The political result, therefore, of the Brahmanical orthodoxy was the destruction of that social solidarity the presence of which is reckoned as the best guarantee of the preservation of political independence.

Fourthly, the people of north India as a whole seem to have suffered from an unprecedented moral and sexual degeneration, which must have greatly impaired their strength as fighters. Obscene images in the outer walls of our temples, such as at Konarak, Khajuraho and many other places, including even at Puri, Chittor and Udaipur, inspite of a philosophical justification, must have brought about corruption and degeneration.

Fifthly, in the later days of their struggle with the foreign invaders, the Hindus of Afghanistan and Sindh had the ill-luck to have to fight simultaneously on two fronts. In the early days of Kia-pi-shi's clash with the Arabs, Kashmir was on friendly terms with the Shahis of Kabul. Lalitaditya Muktapida (c. 713-750 A.D.) of Kashmir had an alliance with the Shahi ruler, because his frontier too was subjected to Arab raids. This wise policy was

15 *Chach-nama*; also R. C. Majumdar's *The Classical Age*, p. 165.

16 The movement seems to have been widespread and begun earlier than the period. Gohilya or Guhil who was of Nagar Brahman parentage had seized Chittor from King Man Mori and set himself up as King in the 6th century A.D.

given up by Lalitaditya's successors, Shankaravarman especially, which compelled the rulers of Kabul to denude their troops from their western front for the defence of their dominion from the grasping ruler of Kashmir, and minimised their power of resistance against the Muslims.

Finally, the mistakes of policy and strategy and those of detail committed in the course of fighting cannot be lightly brushed aside, as they contributed greatly to deciding the fate of the country. For example, the ignorance of the governments of Afghanistan and Sindh about the warlike ambition and activities of the Arabs and their failure to take adequate steps in time for the defence of the country cannot be easily accounted for. Dahir foolishly sent no reinforcement to Debal and other towns of Sindh and allowed these to be individually isolated and conquered. He made no attempt to attack Muhammad bin Qasim, while the latter lay encamped for two months on the bank of the Indus, paralysed by sickness among his horses, and pinned his faith on a single pitched battle.

As regards the general causes, one must admit that, though in no way braver than the Indian troops, the Arab and Turkish armies were better fighting forces on account of their complete equality and social solidarity. Islam had swept away all distinctions of caste and race and given a cohesion to the various races of Central Asia and knit them together into a homogeneous unit. They were, moreover, free from the evil of drink, as the early Muslims religiously obeyed the Quranic injunction which forbade wine. The result was that the invading forces displayed an unexampled unity of purpose and effort, which were not possible for Indian troops, divided as they were by caste, religion and diverse social practices.

Secondly, the invaders were mostly well-mounted archers and their horses and arms gave them indisputable military superiority over our troops. The Arabian horses were proverbial in history, and Turkoman horses were even better. "The Turkoman horse is the noblest in the whole of Central Asia," says the *Cambridge Medieval History*, "and surpasses all other breeds in speed, endurance, intelligence, faithfulness and a marvellous sense of locality. The Turkoman horse is tall, with a long narrow body, long thin legs and neck.....On their predatory expeditions the Turkomans often cover 650 miles in the waterless desert in five days.....They owe their power to the training of thousands of years in the endless steppes

and deserts, and to the continual plundering raids which demanded the utmost endurance and privation of which horse and rider were capable."[17] The Turks, whose homeland lay just south of that of the Turkomans, were only a little less hardy and were mounted on fleet Turkoman and Arab horses. "The Turks were so famous for the speed and vigour of their cavalry charges," writes Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "that in the Asiatic world the phrase Turk-sawar (i.e., Turkish horseman) became a general name for the richly accoutred, superbly mounted dashing cavalry of any race."[18] The weapons of the rank and file of the invaders were a composite bow of two pieces joined together by a metal band which discharged deadly arrows to a range of 80 to 100 paces and "which pierced cuirass and shield with ease," and long spears. The Turkish nobles and their horses were clad in armour and fought with bows and arrows and spears. Both were also equipped with long sharp swords.

Thirdly, leaving individual cases apart, there was perhaps generally speaking better generalship on the enemy side inasmuch as larger forces always call for greater skill in leadership and organisational capacity of a higher order than smaller armies which were at the disposal of the rulers of Sindh, Kabul, Zabul and the Panjab. In fact they could not afford to maintain larger armies on account of their limited resources in men and money and had, therefore, fewer opportunities of developing generalship of a high order.

Fourthly, our leaders and commanders had failed to keep pace with the development of tactics that had been taking place in Asia even before the birth of Islam and were perfected by Arab and Turkish converts to Islam. These tactics consisted in employing mounted archers as light troopers for harassing and bewildering the enemy and causing confusion in his ranks by archery fire, and then charging with armoured heavy cavalry. The squadrons of the invading army were divided into five divisions, namely, right wing, centre, left wing, advance guard and reserve, and used to be drawn up in the form of a crescent. The enemy would not attempt to come close or make a general or frontal attack; but large bodies of the enemy mounted archers would hover round and ply their arrows against the Indian army that was posted in a long formation and

[17] *Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. I, p. 331.
[18] *Hindustan Standard* (Sunday Edition), 7th March, 1954.

divided only into three parts, right wing, centre and left wing. The enemy would late in the day steal round the wings and would molest the fighting Indian army from round behind. In the moment of its confusion the Turkish horses would pour a cloud of arrows and the horns of the crescent would enclose the Indian rear.

Fifthly, whereas the Rajputs prided themselves on their swordsmanship and looked upon the battle as a tournament to display their skill and chivalry, the Arabs and the Turks fought to win and believed that everything was fair in war. The former were also averse to taking advantage of the enemy's weakness and to resort to feints and manoeuvres in which the Arabs and Turks were adepts.

Sixthly, both Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad of Ghur, the former on a much larger scale than the latter, made use of shock tactics to dishearten and demoralise the Indian troops and people. With lightning rapidity they would swoop down upon our fair cities and devastate the land with fire and sword. These tactics were repeated times out of number and so much frightened the people that they began thinking that Mahmud's troops were invincible. Therefore, political and military demoralisation set in, and people wrongly began believing that resistance against the Turkish hordes was useless. It was this feeling that paralysed our society in that age. Finally, the Arabs and the Turks were inspired by a great religious enthusiasm which made them feel and believe that God had made them His instrument in purging the world of idolatry and making it safe for Islam. Our people had no such inspiring ideology to sustain them, except the defence of their country and religion which gave them power to resist and not to carry war into the enemy's country. Mere physical strength and military weapons do not constitute the total equipment of an army. An inspiring ideology is as essential as military training and equipment.

5

INDIA ON THE EVE OF MAHMUD OF GHAZNI'S INVASION

Political condition

There was one notable difference in the political condition of our country at the time of the Arab invasion of Sindh and that on the eve of the Ghaznavide penetration into Hindustan. At the opening of the eighth century there was no foreign colony, much less a foreign power, in the land except a handful of Arab merchants on our western coast whose primary avocation was trade. On the other hand, in the tenth century there were two foreign kingdoms on our soil, namely, Multan and Mansura or Sindh. Besides, a considerable portion of the population in these two kingdoms had been converted to Islam. There were also Arab colonies in southern India, particularly in Malabar, where the Hindu rulers had foolishly permitted the foreigners to proselytize the native population. As was natural for these new converts to a religion, they preferred the foreign ways of life and had sympathy with their fellow Muslims from Ghazni and Central Asia. Subuktigin and Mahmud of Ghazni, as also Muhammad of Ghur, about 150 years later, were lucky to enjoy some kind of moral support from a section of the Indian people.

The Arab kingdoms of Multan and Sindh

The history of the Arab kingdoms need not be related. Suffice it to say that they comprised the whole of modern Multan and Sindh and threw off the Caliph's yoke in 871 A.D. and, since that date, enjoyed complete independence. In view, however, of their peculiar position in a foreign country they nominally professed allegiance to the Caliph for diplomatic reasons. There were dynastic changes in this kingdom from time to time. At the beginning of our period, Multan was ruled by the Karmathians and its ruler was Fateh Daud. He seems to have been a man of some ability. Sindh proper was still ruled over by the Arabs. The neighbouring Hindu kingdoms, despite their political and religious experience at

the hands of the Arabs, had left them unmolested. Everywhere the Arabs and, curiously enough, the new Hindu converts to Islam, were shown consideration and allowed to follow their religion and to make new converts. They constituted a power to be reckoned with.

There was indigenous rule in the rest of the country. Notable among the kingdoms may be enumerated the following.

The Hindushahi kingdom

The first important Hindu kingdom extended from the river Chenab to the Hindukush mountains and included Kabul. Its royal house had resisted, single-handed, the Arab encroachment successfully for 200 years. It was, however, compelled to abandon a part of Afghanistan, including Kabul, and to shift its capital to Udbhandapur or Waihand. The king about the end of the tenth century was the famous Jaipala who was a brave soldier and an able ruler. The situation of his kingdom obliged him to bear the first Turkish onslaughts from Ghazni.

Kashmir

The next notable kingdom was that of Kashmir. Its ruling family, the house of Utpala, came into conflict with the Hindushahi kingdom and the empire of Kanauj. The famous Kashmiri king, Shankaravarman, extended the boundaries of Kashmir in several directions. He died fighting with the people of Urasa, the modern Hazara district. His death was followed by a great confusion. The Brahmans of the Valley, therefore, raised a member of their own fraternity, named Yasaskara, to the throne. His line came to an end within a brief period and was followed by that of Parvagupta. Parvagupta's son and successor was Kshemagupta. During his time his queen, Dida, was the virtual ruler. This powerful lady ultimately seized the throne and crowned herself queen. She ruled over Kashmir till 1003 A.D. when the throne passed to Sangrama Raja, who became the founder of the Lohara dynasty. Thus, when Mahmud of Ghazni was hammering the gates of India, the reins of Kashmir were in the hands of a woman and the condition of the kingdom was far from satisfactory.

Kanauj

The imperial city of Kanauj had passed into the hands of a new dynasty, known as the Pratihara dynasty, in or about 836 A.D.

The Pratiharas traced their descent from Lakshmana, the brother of Shri Rama Chandra, the hero of the Ramayana. But scholars believe that they descended from the Gurjara race. It is said that a certain Gurjara chief served the Rashtrakuta ruler as a *pratihara* (door-keeper) at a sacrifice at Ujjain about the middle of the eighth century A.D. Probably the term *pratihara* was for the first time used in the above connection. A notable ruler of the Pratihara dynasty was Vatsaraja, who won the title of *Samrat* or emperor. He was succeeded by Nagabhatta II who, too, was a notable fighter. He defeated Dharmapala, the king of Bangal; but he suffered defeat at the hands of the Rashtrakutas. The Pratiharas continued to exercise sway over Kanauj and Madhyadesha and to fight, sometimes successfully and at others unsuccessfully, with their neighbours in the north and the south. The Pratihara king, Mahipala, was badly defeated by Indra III, the Rashtrakuta king of the Dakhin. He lost his capital, Kanauj. He was, however, restored by a Chandela king. The Pratihara power was, nevertheless, weakened and the rulers of the dynasty maintained a precarious hold over the upper Ganga valley and parts of Rajasthan and Malwa. Their former feudatories, the Chandelas of Bundelkhand, the Chalukyas of Gujarat and the Paramaras of Malwa, became independent. The last king of this dynasty was Rajyapala. He was a feeble monarch and his capital, Kanauj, was invaded by Mahmud of Ghazni in 1018 A.D. The Pratiharas, in their early days, had successfully fought the Arabs and defended the country against them; but they had grown effete and, in the early years of the eleventh century A.D., they succumbed before the might of the Turks from Ghazni.

The Palas of Bangal

Devapala of the Pala dynasty died after thirty-nine years of reign, some time between 833 and 878 A.D. His successors were weak and the kingdom of Bangal rapidly declined under them. The degenerate later Pala kings came into conflict with the Pratiharas of Kanauj and brought sufferings on Bangal. Mahipala I, who ruled Bangal in the first quarter of the eleventh century, was a contemporary of Mahmud of Ghazni. He succeeded in restoring, at least partially, the fortunes of his family; but a part of Bangal had already fallen into the hands of the powerful vassals who only vaguely recognized the overlordship of the Pala kings. While Mahmud of Ghazni was wasting north-western India with fire and

sword, Bangal was threatened by the power of Tamil ruler, Rajendra Chola. In this warfare Bangal had the worst of it. It, however, remained immune from the Ghaznavide invasion owing to its distance.

Minor kingdoms

Besides the above there were several other small ruling houses in northern India, notable among them being the Chalukyas of Gujarat, the Chandelas of Bundelkhand and the Paramaras of Malwa. They had once been the feudatories to Kanauj, but had declared their independence during the weak rule of the later Pratiharas of the Imperial city.

The Dakhin kingdoms

The progress of the people in southern India was marred by constant warfare among the ruling families. The early Chalukyas in the Dakhin had fallen in the struggle for supremacy, in 753 A.D., at the hands of the Rashtrakutas. The latter, who were at constant warfare with their neighbours, had given place to the later Chalukyas in 973 A.D. Similarly, the great Pallava dynasty had fallen towards the end of the ninth century. The principal kingdoms in the south during our period were the later Chalukya kingdom of Kalyani and the Chola kingdom of Tanjore. The founder of the later Chalukya dynasty was Taila II who claimed descent from the early Chalukyas of Vatapi. He made Kalyani, now in the Hyderabad State, his capital. His successors were involved in a struggle with the Cholas of Tanjore. The Cholas were the descendants of Aditya Chola and had risen to importance under Ramaraja. His son, Rajendra Chola, was a great warrior and conqueror. He made extensive conquests in southern and northern India and was considered one of the greatest rulers in the country. While the Cholas and the Chalukyas were involved in a bitter conflict in the south, mighty empires in Hindustan were crumbling before the might of Mahmud of Ghazni.

Social and religious conditions

For nearly three centuries after the advent of the Arabs our country enjoyed immunity from foreign invasions. This long freedom from foreign interference produced a feeling in the minds of our people and rulers that India could never be threatened by a foreign power. Eternal vigilance, which is said to be the price of

freedom, not only slackened but almost reached the vanishing point. Our rulers neglected their armies. They failed to fortify our north-western frontier and to make an effective arrangement for the defence of the hilly passes through which foreign armies could enter the country. Side by side with this, our people failed to keep in touch with the new military tactics and with the newly invented systems of warfare. Secondly, for the selfsame reason, the people lost almost completely the sense of patriotism and national ardour, which develops under the stimulus of danger from abroad. That was not an age of territorial patriotism; but whatever patriotism there was, disappeared owing to a false sense of security. Thirdly, a kind of narrowmindedness became the characteristic of our people from the eighth to the eleventh centuries of the Christian era. They believed that they were a chosen people and all other people were unfit to be associated with them. The famous scholar Al Beruni, who came to our country in the trains of Sultan Mahmud Ghazni and studied Sanskrit language and Hindu religion and thought, had to note with surprise that "the Hindus believed that there is no country like theirs, no nation like theirs, no king like theirs, no religion like theirs, no science like theirs." He adds that the ancestors of the Hindus "were not so narrowminded as the present (eleventh century) generation." He was also struck by the fact that the Hindus did "not desire that a thing which has once been polluted should be purified and thus recovered."

During this period our country was practically isolated from the rest of the world. Owing to this fact our people ceased to come into touch with foreign lands and, therefore, became ignorant of the happenings, political, military and cultural, in the outside world. Want of contact with dissimilar people and cultures bred stagnation and made our civilisation decadent. In fact, a slow but sure decadence began to manifest itself in every aspect of our life during the period. The Sanskrit literature of these centuries is much inferior in virility and taste to that of the fifth and the sixth centuries. Our architecture and painting and fine arts were similarly adversely influenced; our society, too, became static, caste rules became more rigid. Widowhood began to be rigorously imposed, remarriage of widows among higher classes almost completely stopped and food and drink taboos came into existence. The 'untouchables' were compelled to reside outside the towns.

In the domain of religion also, which must always be the fountain-head of right conduct and morality, perceptible degeneration crept in. The great Shankaracharya, who had organised Hinduism and given it a common philosophical background, had failed to purge it of great evils that had crept into it. *Vamamarga Dharma* had become popular at this period, specially in Kashmir and Bangal. The followers of this creed indulged in wine, flesh, fish and women, and they believed in the motto of 'eat, drink and be merry'. The vicious ideas of this school had permeated some of our educational institutions, patricularly in the University of Vikramasila in Bihar. An incident that took place at the above named university shows how deep the moral canker had gone into our life in that age. A student priest was found with a bottle of wine and, on being interrogated by the university authorities, he revealed that it had been given to him by a nun. When the authorities decided to take disciplinary action against him, the members of the university split up into two parties and the result was trouble. When such an incident could take place at a highest seat of learning, the condition of the upper and middle class people, who lived in sloth and luxury, can well be imagined. Our great *mathas*, which were originally great seats of learning and piety, became centres of luxury and idleness. Many of the monks became licentious. The order of the *sannyasis* lost its significance, but the common people continued showing them reverence. Another evil which can be traced in its exaggerated form to this period was the *devadasi* system. Every important temple had a number of unmarried girls dedicated to the service of the deity. This bred corruption and temple prostitution became common. Tantrik literature which was obscene in the extreme, developed rapidly in this era. It produced an adverse effect on our morals. It was not considered derogatory by the greatest of our scholars of this period to write obscene books. A minister to one of the kings in Kashmir wrote a book named *Kuttini Matam* or 'Opinions of a Go-Between'. Another great Sanskrit scholar, Kshemendra, published *Samaya Matraka* or 'the Autobiography of a Prostitute'. In this book "the heroine describes her adventures in every sphere of society, as a courtesan, as the mistress of a noble, as a street walker, as a go-between, as a false nun, as a corrupter of the youth and as a frequenter of religious places." All this led to moral degeneration

among the upper and the middle class people. Probably the common folk were free from the debasing effect of current literature and *Vamamarga* religion.

Economic condition

Economically the country was rich. Its great mineral and agricultural wealth had continued accumulating for generations, individuals had piled up riches and our temples were their store-houses; but there was great disparity of wealth. The topmost people, that is, the members of the ruling families and their nobles and courtiers rolled in wealth and luxury. The merchant princes were millionaires and spent thousands of rupees in charity. Ordinary village folk were rather poor, though not in want. They were thrifty. They had a few belongings. Nevertheless, the general life was economically prosperous owing to the accumulated wealth, peace and commerce. It was this fabulous wealth that tempted Mahmud of Ghazni to invade our country. Our rulers did not know how to ensure the great wealth of India by organising a wise system of defence. The political structure was also weak. The institutions, of course, were the same as in the time of Harsha; but there was a marked deterioration in the spirit in which they worked. The bureaucracy was corrupt and people, in general, enervated by a variety of debasing influences.

This was the condition of India at the time when Mahmud of Ghazni invaded her. Though outwardly strong, she was unprepared for defending her religion and liberty.

6

MAHMUD OF GHAZNI

Rise of the Turks

Inspite of their initial success the Arabs had not been able to extend their dominion beyond Sindh and Multan. In fact, their rule dwindled into insignificance by the middle of the ninth century A.D. It was left to the Turks to complete the work begun by the Arabs. The Turks had, a short time before our period, embraced Islam and possessed all the zeal and narrowmindedness of neophytes. They were intrepid, brave, full of boundless energy and push and thoroughly materialistic in their outlook. Islam had given them a thin veneer of religiosity. They were inordinately ambitious and their qualities and faults combined to make them eminently fit for founding a big military empire in the east.

Their early raids : Sabuktigin

The Turks who first came into contact with India belonged to an upstart ruling family of Ghazni. A Turkish adventurer named Alaptagin, who was originally a slave and vassal of the Samanid king of Khurasan and Bukhara, established himself as an independent ruler at Ghazni in 962 A.D. One of his successors, named Pirai, signalized his rule by undertaking an invasion of the Indian territory in the possession of the raja of the Panjab. This raja, who belonged to the Hindushahi dynasty, ruled over an extensive territory extending from the river Chenab to the Hindukush mountain, including Kabul. The Hindushahi kingdom had once embraced the whole of modern Afghanistan which was geographically and culturally a part of India. Politically, too, though not continuously, it had been a province of our country since the days of Chandragupta Maurya in the third century B.C. The royal house of this 'Kingdom of Kabul and Zabul' had manfully resisted the Arab aggression. In 664 A.D., however, the latter succeeded in encroaching upon a part of its territory and converting 12,000 of its inhabitants to Islam. For more than three hundred years the Shahi kings fought bravely, and with considerable success, though single-handed, in self-defence, against

INDIA IN 1030 A.D.
Mahmud of Ghazni.

Bukhara
Samarqand
TRANS-OXIANA
Balkh
Ghur
Herat
Waihand
HINDUSHAHI
Kabul
Ghazni
Peshawar
KASHMIR
Srinagar
UTPALAS
Nandanah
Bhera
Sialkot
Kandahar
Lahore
Kangara
Dipalpur
Multan
Sarhind
Bhatinda
Kalat
Uch
Summ
Thaneshwar
Hisor
Hansi
Delhi
Amroha
CHAUHAN
Mathura
Alwar
Ajmer
Agra
Kanauj
Lucknow
Ayodhya
PRATIHARAS
Gwalior
Siwana
Jalor
Abu
Chittor
Amerkot
Thatta
Debal
Mahoba
Kalinjar
CHANDELAS
Benares
Pattiputra
PALAS
Gaur
Gaya
Sonargaon
Nadia
Chatgaon
Anhilwara
CHALUKYAS
Ujjain
Dhar
Bhilsa
Mandu
PARAMARAS
Somanath
Illichpur
Daman
Jajnagar
Deogiri
Thana
Bombay
Chaul
CHALUKYAS
Kalyani
Warangal
Haiderabad
Rajamundry
Dabhol
Raichur
Sandabur
CHOLAS
Kanchi
Kampil
Dwarasamudra
Calicut
Tanjore
PANDYAS
CEYLON
Colombo
ANDAMANIS
PERSIA
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL
CHINA
TIBET

Boundary of the Empire
Over-run by Mahmud

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Miles

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their aggressive Muslim neighbours, first the Arabs and then the Turks. The nascent kingdom of Ghazni wanted to blot this Shahi kingdom out of existence, for it had barred its path of progress to India. Accordingly, Pirai's foreign policy was followed by his successor, Sabuktigin who was a slave and son-in-law of Alaptagin and became king of Ghazni in April 977 A.D. Sabuktigin was a powerful and ambitious chief. Inspite of his constant occupation in Central Asian politics, he found time to raid the frontier of India. Jaipala, the raja of the Panjab, being conscious of the danger of the existence of a rising kingdom in his immediate neighbourhood, pursued the policy of trying to nip the evil in the bud. So he invaded Ghazni with a large force in 986-87 A.D. The parties were well-matched and neither side seemed to give in. Unfortunately, however, owing to a great storm, which disorganised Jaipala's army, the raja had to agree to a peace by which he promised a large indemnity and fifty elephants and some territory to Sabuktigin. But, on his return to Lahore, he repudiated these humiliating terms. Sabuktigin now retaliated by an invasion of the raja's territory and plundering Lamghan. Jaipala called to his aid a number of rulers of the Indian principalities, and marched on Ghazni at the head of a powerful force. In the contest that followed Sabuktigin was again victorious, and he captured Lamghan and Peshawar.

Accession of Mahmud

Sabuktigin died in 997 A.D. and was succeeded by his famous son, Mahmud, though not without a war of succession between him and his younger brother, Ismail, who was nominated heir by their dying father. Mahmud was born on 1st November 971 A.D., and was, at the time of his accession in 998 A.D., twenty-seven years of age. At that time his kingdom comprised Afghanistan and Khurasan. Mahmud secured the formal recognition of his sovereignty from the Caliph of Baghdad (al-Qadir Billah). He was also given the title Yamin-ud-Daulah and Amin-ul-Millah. His dynasty is, therefore, known as the Yamini dynasty.

His character

Mahmud was an extremely ambitious young man. It is said that on the occasion of his investiture by the Khalifa he took a vow to undertake every year an expedition against the infidels of India. He tried to fulfil this vow. Mahmud was not gifted with kingly

looks. He was a man of medium height and of strong build, but was rather ugly looking. He did not possess extraordinary personal prowess. Nevertheless, he was a great general and also an equally good soldier. He was an extremely intelligent and shrewd man, endowed with the royal gift of judging human character. His outstanding virtues were cool courage, prudence and resourcefulness. He was, moreover, a man of restless activity and overpowering ambition. He possessed a habitual air of command and was adept in statecraft. He considered no body as indispensable and used every one he came into contact with as an instrument for the attainment of his object. Professor Muhammad Habib says that his outlook on life was essentially secular and that he was not a man to follow the Muslim *ulema* blindly. He was not, according to this learned author, a fanatic. Mahmud's life and his deeds, however, demonstrate the fact that he was, without doubt, devoted to his religion and that he believed that he was serving the cause of Islam in carrying unprovoked war into the territory of the Hindu idolators. His court historian, Utbi, looked upon Mahmud's expeditions to India as *jihad*, that is, holy war for the extirpation of idolatry and propagation of Islam. "Sultan Mahmud," he writes in his *Tarikh-i-Yamini*, "at first designed in his heart to go to Sijistan, but subsequently preferred to engage previously in a *holy war against Hind.*" Utbi adds that he called a council of his officers "in order to secure a blessing on his design of *exalting the standard of religion*, widening the plain of right, of illuminating the words of truth and strengthening the power of justice." These words clearly show that Mahmud's contemporaries believed that one of the main objects of his aggressive policy against our country was to serve his religion. There were, of course, other reasons. Mahmud was an ambitious man and wanted to rule over as big an empire as a man could possibly create. He was fond of wealth, as all powerful people are, and he had heard of the stories of India's fabulous riches. He was, moreover, a warrior thirsting for military glory. Besides, being a realist, he might possibly have considered the continued existence of a hostile Hindu power in his immediate neighbourhood as a menace to his independent existence, or, at any rate, to his policy of expansion. For all these reasons Mahmud decided, almost immediately after his accession, to pursue a policy of aggressive warfare against Hindustan.

His Indian expeditions

Historians are divided in their opinion regarding the number of Mahmud's invasions on India. Our authorities are so conflicting that it is not possible to ascertain correctly from their statements their exact number. Nor is it very necessary to do so. Some of the most important of these invasions must, however, be noted.[1] The earliest of them took place in 1000 A.D. when Mahmud occupied a few frontier forts. Next he proceeded against Jaipala who is branded by his enlightened historian as 'the enemy of God'. The Sultan had taken all possible precautions in this expedition and selected 15,000 of his picked cavalrymen by a personal inspection of the members of his army. A well-contested battle was fought near Peshawar on 27th November, 1001 A.D. Mahmud's cavalry manoeuvres proved to be effective and, inspite of his valour, Jaipala suffered defeat. He was taken prisoner along with his sons and grandsons and a number of important relatives and officers. Utbi writes that they "being strongly bound with ropes, were carried before the Sultan, like as evil-doers, on whose faces the fumes of infidelity are evident.....and will be bound and carried to Hell. Some had their arms forcibly tied behind their backs, some were seized by the cheek, some were driven by blows on the neck." Mahmud's men appropriated a necklace of gems and rubies from the neck of Jaipala whose value was two lakhs of *dinars*, and similar ornaments from the raja's companions. The victors got spoils 'beyond all bounds of calculation'. Jaipala was released on promise to pay a huge ransom and to surrender fifty of his elephants. Mahmud followed his victory by advance to Waihand (Udabhandapur, modern Hund), which was Jaipala's capital, ravaging the country on the way. He returned to Ghazni soon after, crowned with the laurels of victory and loaded with countless wealth.

Jaipala could not suffer himself to survive the shock of the humiliation he had experienced at the hands of an 'unclean foreigner' and, out of remorse, he burnt himself to death. He was succeeded by his son, Anandapala, in 1002 A.D. These catastrophic incidents must have caused great discouragement and dismay among Jaipala's friends and followers, whereas they must have raised the spirits of

[1] *Sir Henry Elliot*, Vol. II, Appendix D, pp. 434-78 recounts seventeen expeditions of Mahmud, which are usually accepted.

Mahmud and his hordes and whetted their appetite for fresh conquests and booty.

Mahmud's next important invasion was directed against Multan which was ruled over by Fateh Daud who was a Karmathian. The Karmathians were heterodox Shia Muslims and were hated by orthodox Sunnis. As a preliminary to the conquest of Multan, Mahmud led an expedition to Bhera on the left bank of the Jhelam. Anandapala opposed the invader; but he was hustled out of the way, and in 1006 A.D. Mahmud marched upon Multan which he conquered. This new conquest was placed in the hands of Sukhapala, a grandson of Jaipala, who was one of the hostages taken by Mahmud to Ghazni after the final defeat of Jaipala and was there made to embrace Islam. He was called Nausha Shah. Sukhapala, however, adjured his new religion and revolted against Mahmud, who returned to Multan in 1008 A.D. and captured and imprisoned him and Daud. Multan, thus, became a part of Mahmud's wide kingdom.

By allying himself with the Karmathian Daud, Anandapala had given great offence to Mahmud. On the other hand, the conquest of Multan by the ruler of Afghanistan had exposed Anandapala's dominion to attack from two directions. A final and decisive clash between the antagonists was, therefore, only a question of time. Moreover, Mahmud felt that without occupying the Panjab he could not hope to penetrate into the heart of Hindustan and reap the harvests of rich plunder. Anandapala, too, did not fail to appreciate the significance of these developments. He collected a large army, which was probably reinforced by contingents from the neighbouring princes who were anxious to stem the tide of the Turkish expansion. At the head of this force Anandapala proceeded towards Peshawar. Mahmud met him on the plain opposite Waihand near about the year 1009 A.D. and succeeded in inflicting a crippling blow upon the raja. The Indian army broke down and it retreated in disorder. Mahmud pursued them and besieged the fort of Nagarkot near Kangara. This fort fell into the enemy's hands after three days' stubborn resistance. Mahmud acquired rich booty here, including immense gold and various other precious commodities. The entire country from the Indus to Nagarkot fell into the hands of the victor. Utbi, the historian of Mahmud, writes that at Nagarkot so much booty was acquired that "the treasures were laden on the backs of

as many camels as they could procure, and the officers carried away the rest. The stamped coin amounted to 70,000 royal *dirhams* and the gold and silver ingots amounted to seven lakhs and 400 *mans* in weight, besides wearing apparel and fine clothes of Sus, respecting which old men said that they never remembered to have seen so fine, soft and embroidered. Among the booty was a house of white silver, like to the houses of rich men, the length of which was thirty yards and the breadth fifteen. It could be taken to pieces and put together again. And there was a canopy made of the linen of Rum, forty yards long and twenty broad, supported on two golden and two silver poles, which had been cast in moulds."

The Hindushahi kingdom had now shrunk to a small principality, yet Anandapala, its brave ruler, did not lose his spirits. In fact, his repeated reverses made him all the more determined to resist the enemy to the bitter end. He shifted his capital to Nandanah, situated on the northern spur of the Salt Range. He gathered a small army and made an attempt to consolidate his position in the Salt Range region. He died here a peaceful death and was succeeded by his son, Trilochanapala. The new ruler, like his father, had no peace, for Mahmud went on gradually advancing and, in 1014 A.D., captured Nandanah after a brief siege in which Trilochanapala's son, Bhimapala, played an important part. After this defeat Trilochanapala took shelter in Kashmir. But Mahmud pursued him there and defeated a combined army of Trilochanapala and his new ally, Tunga, the commander of the Kashmir ruler. Mahmud did not consider it safe to penetrate into Kashmir, but Trilochanapala, too, did not like to end his days as a refugee in Kashmir. His ambition was to rule over the Panjab, his ancestral kingdom, and, therefore, he returned to the eastern part of the Panjab and established himself in the Sivalik hills. He entered into an alliance with the Chandela ruler of Bundelkhand, named Vidyadhar, who was one of the most powerful princes in northern India. Mahmud wanted to break this alliance and with that end in view he came to India once again in 1009 A.D. and defeated Trilochanapala in a battle near the Rama Ganga. Trilochanapala had now only nominal territory to rule over. The decline in his fortunes gave rise to dissensions among his followers, and he was assassinated by some of them in 1021-22 A.D. He was succeeded by his son, Bhimapala, who was but a petty chieftain. He died in 1026 A.D., and with him came to an end

the once glorious and mighty Hindushahi dynasty of north-western Hindustan.

The decline and decay of the Hindushahi kingdom, which was the first to bear the brunt of the Turkish onslaught, enabled Mahmud to penetrate into the heart of Hindustan. First of all he seiged, in 1004 A.D., the fort of Bhatinda which lay on the route from the north-west into the rich Ganga valley. It was bravely defended by the local ruler, named Bijai Rai, but Mahmud's superior military strength succeeded in capturing it. All the inhabitants of the place, except those who became converts to Islam, were put to the sword. A huge booty was captured. Next, he decided to cover the flank of the Hindushahi territory so as not to leave the possibility of any danger from that side threatening his line of communication or the rear of the army of invasion. That was why he decided to conquer Multan from Fateh Daud, the Karmathian, in 1006 A.D., as already related.

In 1009 A.D. Mahmud defeated Anandapala near Waihand and captured Nagarkot. In the same year he acquired possession of Narainpur in the modern district of Alwar. This place had great commercial importance and had become the emporium of foreign articles from Central Asia as well as indigenous ones from the various parts of our country. In 1014 A.D. Mahmud started from Ghazni in order to capture the sacred city of Thaneshwar, hallowed by the temple of Chakraswami. On his way to the place he was encountered by a Hindu ruler who inflicted a very heavy loss on Mahmud's army; but, when he reached Thaneshwar, he was pleasantly surprised to find that the people offered no resistance whatever. Mahmud plundered the city and sent the image of Chakraswami to Ghazni where it was cast in the public square.

Between 1015 and 1021 A D. Mahmud made two unsuccessful attempts to conquer Kashmir, but he was baffled both the times. At last he gave up the idea of enslaving that Happy Valley.

Owing to the annihilation of the Hindushahi kingdom the flood-gates of Turkish invasions were opened up to submerge the very heart of Hindustan. Eager to exploit the opportunity to the best advantage, Mahmud now directed his march towards the Ganga-Yamuna Doab. He started from Ghazni in 1018 A.D. and proceeded towards Mathura which was one of the most thickly populated and wealthy cities. It was, moreover, the Hindu Bethelehem,

being the birth-place of Shri Krishna. Mahmud found it a well-protected city, beautified by an array of imposing temples; but the garrison made no attempt to defend this holy city or its artistic shrines. The invading army destroyed many temples and captured immense treasure that had been accumulated there for generations. An idea of the splendour of Mathura and the destruction wrought by the Muslim fanatical invader can be had from a description of that city given by Utbi who says : "He (Mahmud) saw a city of wonderful fabric and conception, so that one might say there is a building of paradise, but its accidents or qualities could only come by the aid of the infernals, and an intelligent man would hardly receive favourably the account of it.....Around it.....they had placed 1,000 castles built of stones which they had made idol temples..... And in the midst of the city they had built a temple higher than all, to delineate the beauty and decoration of which the pen of all writers and the pencils of all painters would be powerless, and would not be able to attain to the power fixing their minds upon it and considering it." In the Memoir which the Sultan wrote of his journey he thus declares : "If any one should undertake to build a fabric like that he would expend thereon one lakh packets of a thousand *dinar*, and would not complete it in 200 years, with the assistance of the most ingenious architects." These temples, according to Utbi, contained valuable idols of pure gold, five of which were of the height of five cubits, and in one of which there was a jacinth of the value of more than 50,000 *dinars*. Another idol had a sapphire of one solid piece, of azure water, of the value of 400 fine *miskals*. The invaders acquired a huge treasure buried under the feet of many an idol. They got from the feet of one idol as much treasure as was of the value of four lakh *miskals* of gold. There were many idols of silver which, too, were equally costly. Mahmud devastated the entire city and plundered it from one corner to the other. Vrindavan witnessed the same scene of plunder and arson, massacre and rape.

From Mathura Mahmud proceeded to Kanauj which was the imperial seat of northern India since the days of the great Harsha. It was ruled by Rajyapala, the last Gurjara-Pratihara ruler, who fled as soon as he heard of the news of Mahmud's approach. The city was besieged and conquered without much resistance. It witnessed the same plunder and massacre that the holy city of Mathura

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had already seen. Here, too, Mahmud acquired treasure and booty 'beyond all calculation'. After this he returned to Ghazni, conquering a few small forts on the way.

The desecration and destruction of the beautiful temples of the holy Mathura touched the conscience of some of the notable leaders, prominent among whom was the Chandela ruler of Bundelkhand. This notable chief (who is variously called Ganda or Vidyadhar), made an attempt to organise a league of some prominent rulers for the defence of their religion and country. The members of this league were dissatisfied with Rajyapala of Kanauj who had fled from his capital without offering any resistance to the invader. So they attacked Rajyapala and defeated and killed him. This brought Mahmud once again to our country, for he was naturally anxious to prevent the formation of a league against him. Starting from Ghazni at the end of 1019 A.D., he met opposition from Trilochanapala of the Hindushahi dynasty. Trilochanapala was defeated and Mahmud proceeded towards Bundelkhand. The Chandela prince tried to obstruct his passage and met him at the head of a powerful army. But, for some unrecorded reason, he left the field during the night, and Mahmud, who was about to give way to despair at the sight of so big a force, ravaged the Chandela territory and became the master of an enormous booty. He returned to Ghazni in 1022.

Towards the end of the same year he returned to India to crush the power of the Chandelas. While on his way to Kalinjar, an important Chandela fortress, he tried to capture Gwalior, the ruler of which was one of the feudatories of the Chandela prince; but Gwalior was so formidable a fortress that it could not be captured. Mahmud did not like to be delayed on the way and so he made peace with the Kachhawaha ruler of that place and resumed his journey to Kalinjar. Kalinjar was besieged, but it could not be easily captured. The siege lasted for a long time and Mahmud, anxious to return to Ghazni, made peace with the Chandela prince who agreed to the payment of a tribute in the form of 300 elephants. It is said that the Chandel ruler even composed a poem in praise of the invader which so pleased Mahmud that he rewarded him with the government of fifteen fortresses. After this peace he returned to Ghazni with his spoils.

Mahmud's last famous expedition to Hindustan was that to

Somanath. It is said that the Brahmans of the Somanath temple, situated on the coast of Kathiawar, had boasted that Lord Somanath was displeased with other dieties; that was why they had been sacked and broken to pieces by Mahmud, the Idol-breaker. It was this vaunt which is said to have been responsible for Mahmud's resolve to attack Somanath. Starting from Ghazni on 17th October, 1024 A.D., with the biggest army that he had so far commanded, he reached Multan on 20th November. He took elaborate precautions on the way, for his route lay through the inhospitable desert of Rajputana. Every trooper had to carry with him food, water and fodder for seven days. Besides this Mahmud had arranged to have provisions and water for the entire army sufficient for the duration of the march through the desert, which was loaded on 30,000 camels. On his arrival at Anhilwara in January, 1025 A.D., Mahmud was pleasantly surprised to learn that Raja Bhima Deo, with most of his followers, had fled from the place. Those who had remained behind were defeated and plundered. The people in the town and in the shrine of Somanath, however, stuck to their places, believing that they would be absolutely safe owing to the protection given to them by Lord Somanath. Mahmud captured the place without much difficulty and ordered a general slaughter in which more than 50,000 persons are said to have perished. The idol of Somanath was broken to pieces which were sent to Ghazni, Mecca and Madina and cast in streets and the staircases of chief mosques to be trodden by the Muslims going there for their prayers. This idol was considered to be one of the great wonders of the place. "It was in the middle of the temple, without anything to support it from below or to suspend it from above. It was held in the highest honour amongst the Hindus, and whoever beheld it floating in the air was struck with amazement whether he was a Musalman or an infidel. Mahmud ordered the loadstones in the canopy to be removed. The idol, therefore, fell to the ground. It was then broken to pieces." It is said that the value of the spoils found in the temple exceeded twenty lakhs of *dinars*. Laden with this rich booty, Mahmud returned to Ghazni through Sindh. His last expedition was undertaken only against the Jats of Sindh who had harassed him during his return march from Somanath to Ghazni in the previous year. This ended his Indian career. He died in 1030 A.D.!

An estimate of Mahmud

Mahmud was one of the greatest Muslim kings of Asia. He ruled over a vast dominion which extended from Iraq and the Caspian Sea to the Ganga and was more extensive than the empire of the Caliph of Baghdad. This empire was practically created by him. He had inherited from his father the provinces of Ghazni and Khurasan only. Mahmud was a thorough-going despot in whose hands were concentrated all power and authority. His ministers were his servants and creatures who could be appointed and dismissed at will. Mahmud's will had the force of law. He was the chief executive and judicial authority of his kingdom and he was also his own commader-in-chief. His powers and prerogatives were limited only by the customary Muslim law and by the fear of a military rising. But Mahmud discharged his duties in his home kingdom successfully and maintained law and order. These achievements entitle him to a high place among the monarchs of the time and show that he was gifted with considerable administrative ability.

Mahmud was a brave soldier and a great general. It is said that he was not gifted with extraordinary personal prowess, but he was fearless and extremely intrepid. As a general his success lay in making a clever use of the extant material and in infusing a new life into the old system then in existence. He was a judge of human character and understood and appreciated the qualities of his subordinates and troops and thus he made each individual contribute to his success in the manner in which he liked and to the extent to which each man was capable of contributing. He was a born leader of men. His army was not a homogeneous force; it was composed of diverse racial and religious elements, such as Arabs, Afghans, Turks and Hindus. But his able generalship welded them all into a powerful unit. It is sometimes supposed that Mahmud displayed conspicuous military capacity against the then effete Hindus only and hence his generalship has been unduly exaggerated. This is a mistaken view, for we know that he attained equal success in Central Asia and in Persia.

Mahmud was a cultured patron of scholarship and art. He had himself some skill as a poet and a scholar. He beautified the city of Ghazni by erecting stately palaces and mosques, colleges and tombs. He gathered around him scholars of ability and reputation. He held religious and literary discussions with them at his court.

Among the topmost literary lights that thronged the court of Ghazni, the most important were Al Beruni, Firdausi, Unsuri and Farrukhi. His secretary was the famous Utbi, to whose scholarship we owe not a little material for a history of Mahmud and his time. Mahmud founded a university at Ghazni. He also collected brilliant artists from all parts of the Muslim world.

Mahmud enjoyed a reputation for his great sense of justice in his kingdom. According to a great authority, "Mahmud was a just sovereign, a lover of learning, a man of generous nature and a pure faith." He was an orthodox Sunni Musalman punctilious in the observance of his religious rites. He was careful to see that his Muslim subjects did not deviate from Sunni orthodoxy. He punished heresy and persecuted such heretics in Islam as the Karmathians.

According to Professor Muhammad Habib of Aligarh University, 'Mahmud was not a fanatic and his expeditions against India were not motivated by religion but by love of plunder. The learned Professor concludes by saying that Islam does not sanction plundering raids and vandalism and that Mahmud rendered disservice to his religion by his acts of barbarism in India. That Mahmud was a deeply pious Muslim king and punctilious in the observances of his faith was not a subject of controversy with contemporaries who believed that the ruler of Ghazni was an ideal Islamic monarch. Likewise, contemporary Muslim opinion is unanimous in its belief and assertion that Mahmud not only rendered a great service to his religion by his Indian expeditions, but even exalted Islam. As regards the view that Islam does not sanction vandalism and atrocities of the type committed by Mahmud, it may be said that a student of history is not concerned with the dogmas of a religion. He has to assess their effect on the conduct and actions of its adherents. It is an incontrovertible fact that those who were qualified to interpret the principles of Muslim religion, during the lifetime of Mahmud and for centuries after his death, held the view that that ruler of Ghazni not only did not depart from strict Islamic principles, but glorified them by his conduct in India.

To the Indian world of his day Mahmud was a veritable devil incarnate—a daring bandit, an avaricious plunderer and wanton destroyer of Art. He plundered many dozens of our flourishing cities; he razed to the ground great temples which were wonderful works of art; he carried thousands of innocent women and children into

slavery; he indulged in wanton massacre practically everywhere he went; and, above all, he forcibly converted hundreds of our unwilling people to Islam. A conqueror who leaves behind desolate towns and villages and dead bodies of innocent human beings cannot be remembered by posterity by any other title.

Mahmud was not a ruler so far as India was concerned. He annexed the Panjab after the fall of the Hindushahi dynasty, owing to geographical, military and strategic reasons. Without occupying this part of the country his line of communications would have been unsafe and he would not have been in a position to move fearlessly into the heart of the Ganga-Yamuna Doab. Yet Mahmud became the founder of the Turkish power in India, for he paved the way for the establishment of the future Sultanate of Delhi. Mahmud was not a statesman. His ability even as a ruler has been exaggerated. Professor S. R. Sharma calls him an angel to his own people. On the other hand, he did little beyond giving his dominions peace and order. No permanent institution and no nation-building activity was associated with his name. If he did a little for education, it was not for the people at large, but for a select class and for personal glorification. Lane-Poole is right in concluding: "He left his dominion so ill-knitted together that they began to fall assunder as soon as he was no longer alive to guard them by his vigilant activity." His inordinate fondness for wealth was a blot on his character, as it weakened rather than strengthened his usefulness and his reputation. The story of his refusal to pay Firdausi a gold piece for every verse of his celebrated *Shah Nama* to which he was pledged, and that of his death-bed sobs at the thought that he was leaving his riches behind, may not have been literally true, but they do reflect the popular opinion of his character long after he was dead.

Inspite of these faults he must be called a monarch of outstanding ability, if not of character. Professor Habib is right when he says that Mahmud's pre-eminence among his contemporaries was due to his ability and not to his character.

Successors of Mahmud

Mahmud seems to have been conscious of the unwieldiness of his empire. Before his death he divided it among his two sons, Masud and Muhammad; but there was no peaceful succession to his throne. As soon as his eyes were closed in death, there was a war of succession between them. Masud gained the upper hand. He

defeated his brother, blinded him and threw him into prison. Masud reigned for ten years, from 1030 to 1040 A.D., and was invested with the title of Sultan by the Khalifa. Though Masud was gifted with great personal prowess, he was badly defeated by the Seljuqs in 1040 A.D. near Merv and compelled to flee towards Lahore. The province of the Panjab had been ruled, during the later days of Mahmud's reign and throughout that of Masud, by deputies. The administration of the province was disorganised by the disloyalty, selfishness and inefficiency of Muslim officers. Masud was, however, ably and loyally served by a Hindu general, named Tilak, who had risen from obscurity to the rank of a minister in the time of his (Masud's) father. The affairs of the Panjab, inspite of Tilak's loyalty and devotion, were not going on well when Masud fled to Lahore for shelter. His defeat at the hands of the Seljuqs had disorganised his army. His troops mutinied on the way, dethroned and handed him over to his blind brother, Muhammad, who now crowned himself king. Masud was put to death by the new ruler. A little later, Masud's son, Maudud, organised a party of his own with the help of some prominent nobles. He defeated Muhammad and put him and his son to death.

Maudud was a weak ruler. He ruled from 1040 to 1049 A.D. On his death there was again a war of succession, and one after another, a series of incompetent rulers sat upon the throne at Ghazni. The reigns of these weaklings were short and inglorious. Besides the trouble in the Panjab, these rulers were constantly menaced by the rising power of the Seljuqs. The greatest danger to the decadent house of Ghazni, however, came from the principality of Ghur. The family feud between these two ruling houses, namely, those of Ghazni and Ghur, developed into a conflict which reached a climax in 1155 A.D. when Ala-ud-din Husain of Ghur invaded Ghazni, subjected it to thorough plunder and burnt it so completely that he earned the nickname of *Jahan Soz*, 'the World Burner'. Ala-ud-din slaughtered the people of Ghazni in thousands and enslaved its women and children. All its buildings were dug up and destroyed except the tomb of Mahmud. In the forth quarter of the 12th century A.D. the house of Mahmud was extinguished by Shahab-ud-din Muhammad Ghuri.

The Panjab under the Ghaznavides

Mahmud annexed the Panjab whose administration he

entrusted to the care of a governor. This was, thus, our third province, Sindh and Multan being the first two, to have passed into the hands of Muslim invaders from the north-west. Mahmud may be said to have been the first Turk who ruled over a province of our country and became the founder of a dynasty. His successors, after they had lost their hereditary kingdom of Ghazni, sought protection at Lahore and ruled there till the extinction of his dynasty in 1186 A.D.

The administration of the Panjab suffered from progressive deterioration owing to the disloyalty and incompetence of the Turkish officers during the reigns of Mahmud's successors. The governor, Ariyaruq, was found guilty of misappropriation of the royal revenue. He was summoned to Ghazni by Masud and put to death. He was succeeded by the notorious Ahmad Nialtigin who was innocent of a sense of honesty as well as of experience of civil and military affairs. This man quarrelled with the *qazi*, Abul Hasan, and led, in 1033 A.D., a plundering expedition to Banaras from where he brought enormous wealth. Masud was alarmed at the reports of Nialtigin's pretensions and mismanagement and sent his Hindu general, Tilak, a handsome and accomplished soldier and a man of letters who had risen to a high rank in Mahmud's service, to chastise the delinquent. In the contest that followed Ahmad Nialtigin was killed and his head was sent by Tilak to Masud, who appointed, in 1036 A.D., his own son, Majdud, governor in the vacant office. In 1037 A.D. Masud in person came to India and besieged Hansi and stormed it on January 1, 1039 A.D. indulging in the massacre of the innocent population and enslaving many women and children. In 1040 A.D., Masud, having been badly defeated by the Seljuqs, abandoned Ghazni and retreated towards Lahore. He was, however, waylaid and imprisoned by his own followers who placed his brother, Muhammad, on the throne. Maudud was the next ruler (1041-42), who defeated and killed Nami, governor of Lahore, and occupied the province.

The Panjab remained a part of the Ghazni empire under Maudud; but the people of the province had little regard for his rule. In 1044 A.D. Mahipala, the raja of Delhi, wrested Hansi, Thaneshwar and Kangara from the Ghaznavide governor and re-established Hindu worship in those places. He even besieged Lahore, but had to return without success. In 1048 A.D. Maudud appointed

his sons, Mahmud and Mansur, governors of Lahore and Peshawar respectively; but corruption and inefficiency continued as before. Maudud's death in December, 1049 A.D. led to a protracted intrigue and palace disturbance. One after another, there came to the throne of Ghazni a number of weaklings who were rulers in name only. One of them, Ibrahim, enjoyed a long and comparatively peaceful reign of forty-two years and died in August, 1099 A.D. His son, Masud III, reigned for seventeen years. Sometime after his death which occurred in 1115 A.D., the Seljuqs intervened in a succession quarrel and supported Bahram against Arsalam who was defeated and put to death in 1118 A.D. His son and successor, Khusrav Shah, was defeated and driven from Ghazni by the Ghuzz Turkomans about 1160 A.D. He fled to the Panjab, for that province alone remained in the hands of Ghaznavides. On his death, in 1160 A.D., the throne of the Panjab passed to his son, Malik Khusrav, who was a mild and voluptuous ruler and allowed the district officers of his dwindling kingdom to exercise semi-independent authority. A new danger for the Ghaznavides now made its appearance. Slice after slice the territory of the Panjab was conquered by Muhammad of Ghur, who was assigned the Jagir of Ghazni by his brother, Ghiyas-ud-din, until in 1186 A.D., he imprisoned Malik Khusrav and occupied the entire Panjab. Since 1186 A.D. Khusrav was kept a prisoner by Muhammad Ghur and was put to death in 1192 A.D.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE

The Yamini Dynasty

Sabuktigin

(1) Mahmud (of Ghazni) — Ismail

(2) Muhammad — (3) Masud I — (7) Abdur Rashid

Majdud — (4) Maudud — (6) Ali — (8) Farrukhzad — (9) Ibrahim

(5) Masud II — Mahmud — Mansur — (10) Masud III

(11) Sherzad — (12) Arsalan — (13) Bahram Shah

(14) Khusrav Shah

(15) Khusrav Malik
(Imprisoned and murdered by Muhammad Ghuri)

7

INDIA ON THE EVE OF MUHAMMAD OF GHUR'S INVASION

In the last quarter of the twelfth century A.D. there were three foreign kingdoms in north-western India. They were the Panjab, Multan and Sindh.

The Ghaznavide Panjab

Since its conquest and annexation by Mahmud in the first quarter of the eleventh century, the Panjab had remained an integral part of the Ghaznavide empire until its extinction in 1186 A.D. As has already been related, Khusrav Shah, driven from his ancestral home by the Ghuzz Turks, sought refuge in the Panjab. From that time onwards his successors abandoned Ghazni altogether and made the Panjab their home and Lahore their capital. After Sindh the Panjab may be considered to have become the next Muslim kingdom in India. This kingdom included Peshawar and Sialkot in the north and the Hindu state of Jammu lay to the north-east, while its boundary on the south and the south-west was constantly fluctuating. The Chauhan ruler, Prithvi Raj I, fought with the Muslims. His successor Ajayaraj lost Nagor to Bahlim, a Ghaznavide officer, in 1112 A.D. Vigraharaj III recovered Hansi from the Ghaznavide Sultan of the Panjab in 1167 A.D. and his successor Prithvi Raj II fortified it as an outpost against the Turks. A few years later, Prithvi Raj II wrested Bhatinda, situated further north, and thus shifted the Chauhan frontier in the north to very near modern Firozpur. The Turkish kingdom of the Panjab suffered from decline and deterioration during the reigns of Mahmud's successors. Corruption and inefficiency were the rule. Khusrav Malik, the last ruler of the Ghaznavide dynasty, was a pleasure-loving, worthless prince, who allowed his servants to exercise practically independent power. Inspite of this natural decay, sometimes an enterprising commander of the sultan's army would undertake a distant raid into the territory of a neighbouring Hindu chief, devastate it and bring valuable spoils; but such a daring character in the effete Ghaznavides was an exception and

not the rule. In fact, the Ghaznavide sultan of Lahore lived in daily fear of the Rajput attack on his kingdom.

Multan under the Karmathians

The province of Multan, situated in the upper valley of the Indus, was ruled over by Qaramitah Muslims who were Shias. This province had been conquered by Mahmud, but it regained its independence under the Qaramitahs after that monarch's death. Uch also seems to have been a part of the Qaramitah kingdom.

Sindh under the Sumras

South of Multan lay Lower Sindh with its capital at Debal. Mahmud had conquered these parts also, but not long after his death a local tribe, called the Sumras, re-asserted its independence. The Sumras were Muhammadans of an obscure origin. Like the Qaramitahs they too were Shia Muslims.

The Rajputs : their virtues and faults

The rest of India was ruled by the Rajputs who claimed descent from the ancient Kshatriyas and traced their pedigree to the Sun and the Moon. Historians, however, are of opinion that the Rajputs were a mixed race, having in their veins the blood of the ancient Kshatriyas and also that of some foreign invaders who eventually found a place in Hindu society. The Rajputs were a brave people. They excelled their adversary, the Turk, in reckless bravery and chivalric sense of honour. They prided themselves on their swordsmanship and made warfare their hobby. Their great qualities were, however, marred by the presence of clannishness among them. The structure of society in which they lived and had their being was essentially feudal. Their thirst for military glory made them subordinate other activities to this their all-absorbing passion, and this proved to be the cause of their downfall.

The Chalukyas of Anhilwara

The most important Rajput dynasty in western India, so close to the three north-western provinces held by foreigners, was the Chalukya ruling family of Anhilwara. Jaya Singh Siddharaja (1102-1143) raised this dynasty to eminence and conquered a large portion of the Paramara kingdom of Malwa. He reduced the Guhilot kingdom of Chittor, and rounded off his conquest by the reduction of Nadol and Girnar in Kathiawar. He came into clash with the Chauhan ruler of Ajmer and the warfare between these two houses

eventually reduced the Chalukyas to a second-rate power. One by one, Malwa, Chittor and other parts of western and southern Rajputana re-asserted their independence. Only Gujarat and Kathiawar remained under the Chalukyas. Moola Raj II was the Chalukya ruler at the time of Muhammad of Ghur's invasion.

The Chauhans of Ajmer

The next important Rajput power was that of the Chauhans of Ajmer. This dynasty was founded by Samanta. Ajayapala founded Ajmer in the eleventh century A.D. For a brief period under Arno Raja (c. 1153-1164) the Chauhans had to acknowledge the Chalukya suzerainty. Very soon after, however, the Chauhans regained their independence and even rose to eminence and subjugated north-eastern Rajputana. Visala Deva (Vigraharaja III) captured Delhi about 1150 A.D. from the Tomaras and, a little later, he captured Hansi from the Ghaznavides. An important ruler of this dynasty was Prithviraj II who ruled from 1167 to 1169 A.D. His son was the famous Prithviraj III (1178-1193 A.D.) popularly known as Rai Pithora. He conquered Mahoba from the Chandela ruler, Paramardi. He was reputed to have been a great warrior and fighter. He was, however, not on good terms with his neighbours.

The Gahadwaras of Kanauj

The most important Rajput ruling family at this time was the Gahadwara dynasty of Kanauj. Originally the Gahadwara kingdom consisted of Kashi (Banaras), Kaushala (Awadh), Kaushik (Allahabad region) and Indraprastha (Delhi region), but gradually the Gahadwaras expanded in all directions and, by a systematic policy of conquest, made Kanauj one of the most extensive kingdoms in the country. Govinda Chand was one of the most notable rulers of this dynasty. During his reign the eastern boundary of Kanauj was pushed to Patna. Gobinda Chand was succeeded by Vijaya Chand who ruled from about 1155 to 1170 A.D. He continued the policy of aggressive warfare which he had inherited from his predecessors. Jaya Chand, a contemporary of Muhammad of Ghur, was the last ruler of this dynasty.

The Chandelas of Bundelkhand and the Kalachuris of Chedi

Two other Rajput ruling families deserve mention, for they were not only virile, but also in constant warfare with their neighbours. They were the Chandelas of Kalinjar and Mahoba and the

Kalachuris of Chedi. The Chandelas established their dominion over the southern parts of the Ganga-Yamuna Doab, including western Bundelkhand in the tenth century A.D. Madan Varma, a noble ruler of this dynasty, defeated the Paramaras of Malwa and held his own against Siddharaja of Gujarat. He defeated the Kalachuris, who ruled at Tripuri in the modern Jabalpur district of the Madhya Pradesh. The Kalachuris seemed to have ultimately become feudatories to the Chandela prince about the end of the twelfth century. But the Chandelas themselves were finally beaten by the Gahadwaras. The last important king of this dynasty, named Paramardi Deva, was defeated by Prithviraj II of Ajmer and compelled to cede a portion of his territory to the Chauhans. At the opening of our period the Chandela dominion comprised Mahoba, Khajuraho, Kalinjar and Ajaigarh. It probably included Jhansi also.

The Paramaras of Malwa with their capital at Dhar, so powerful and famous in the time of their greatest ruler, Bhoja (c. 1010-1055), had sunk low in the twelfth century. The representative of this dynasty at the time of Muhammad of Ghur's invasion was an insignificant prince and a virtual vassal of the Chalukyas of Gujarat.

The Palas of North Bangal

In eastern India there were two well-known Rajput kingdoms. They were the Pala empire and the Sena kingdom. Once upon a time the Pala empire included the whole of Bangal and the whole of Bihar. But it was fast undergoing decay. In the twelfth century Ramapala, a king of this dynasty, was able to revive for a short period the imperial glory of his ancestors by a number of victories in Utkal, Kalinga and Kamarupa. After his death, however, the Pala dynasty relapsed into lethargy. The Brahmaputra Valley declared its independence. Similarly, southern Bangal cut itself off and everywhere petty governors not only raised their heads, but also behaved as independent chiefs. The later rulers of this dynasty, such as Kumarapala (1126-1130) and Madanapala (1130-1150), were weaklings and under them the once formidable Pala empire dwindled into a small kingdom confined to north Bangal. They lost most of Bihar. In Gaya and Hazaribagh district new dynasties came into existence.

The Sena kingdom of Bangal

The Sena family profited most owing to the decay and downfall of the Pala empire. The Senas are supposed to have come from southern India and established themselves in eastern India in the eleventh century A.D. One of the members of this family, named Vijaya Sena (1097-1159), seized East Bangal. He obtained possession of North Bangal also. He was in constant warfare with the rulers of Kamarupa, Kalinga and South Bangal and is reputed to have obtained victories over them. He is said to have defeated Nanya Deva of Mithila (North Bihar). The later rulers of this dynasty were Ballala Sena (1159-1170) and his son, Lakshmana Sena (1170-1206). Their dominion consisted of North and East Bangal and included Mithila and, perhaps, some districts lying on the western border of Mithila. Lakshmana Sena's administration was torn by internal dissensions and weakened by his old age.

It is clear from the foregoing narrative that northern India was divided into many small kingdoms which were on terms of hostility with one another. More than one dynasty claimed pre-eminence and paramountcy over others. This claim could be decided by sword alone, and hence throughout our period the Rajput rulers of the north engaged themselves in constant warfare with their neighbours and paid little attention to the developments in the north-western provinces of India which were in foreign hands, namely, the Panjab, Multan and Sindh. Owing to this state of affairs it was not possible for them, much less for the Indian people (for the people hardly existed as such in that age), to combine against a foreign invader. Was it not still more difficult for them to make a common effort to expel the Turk from the Panjab, Multan and Sindh, where he had secured a permanent lodgement ?

The administrative, economic, cultural and social conditions had hardly witnessed any fundamental change since the eleventh century. In fact, our civilization had become practically static and, hence, was inclined to a downward trend. The reader is referred to the fifth chapter of this volume for a perusal of those conditions.

8

MUHAMMAD OF GHUR

Early history of Ghur

The mountainous district of Ghur is situated in the hills between Ghazni and Herat. In the tenth century A.D. it was an independent principality and was ruled by a Tajik family of Persian origin, known to history as the Shansbani dynasty. Its ruler, Muhammad bin Suri, was defeated by Mahmud of Ghazni in or about 1009 A.D., and was reduced to the position of a vassal. Since that date the ruler of Ghur became a feudatory of Ghazni. The principality of Ghur, however, took full advantage of the decline of Ghazni after the death of Mahmud in 1030 A.D. This was made possible by a quarrel between the ruling houses of the two kingdoms. Bahram of Ghazni murdered a prince of Ghur, named Malik Qutub-ud-din Hasan. This roused the wrath of Saif-ud-din Suri, the brother of the deceased, who invaded Ghazni and defeated Bahram. A little later, Bahram retaliated and put Saif-ud-din to death. The quarrel now developed into a family feud, and Ala-ud-din Husain, Saif-ud-din's younger brother, completely devastated and burnt the city of Ghazni, as we have already seen, and earned the nickname of *Jahan Soz*. Ala-ud-din came into clash with Sanjar, the last of the imperial Seljuqs. But he escaped his doom owing to the difficulties the latter was in. Ala-ud-din conquered Bamian, Turkistan, Jerun and Bast and even Gharjistan, in the Valley of the Murghab river. He conquered the city of Herat also. Towards the end of his reign he lost Balkh, Turkistan and Herat, but retained his hold over other parts of his dominions. He died in 1161. He was succeeded by his son, named Saif-ud-din. On his death the principality of Ghur passed to his cousin Ghiyas-ud-din. He recovered Ghazni, which had been lost by his predecessors, and added a number of districts to his dominion. His ambition brought him into conflict with the Khwarizm Shah. Ghiyas-ud-din acquired some initial success over his rival and conquered several districts in the neighbourhood of Khurasan; but, ultimately, the Ghuride ruler was decisively

beaten at Andhkhud. He was allowed to retain possession of Herat and Balkh, only two provinces of his extensive conquest in the north-west. Thus the Ghuride activity in the north-west brought little advantage and the ruler of this dynasty had to turn towards India. Ghiyas-ud-din Muhammad, king of Ghur, appointed his younger brother Shahab-ud-din *Alias* Muiz-ud-din Muhammad to the government of Ghazni in 1173 A.D., when that city was recovered from the Ghuzz Turkomans of Central Asia. The latter was on very friendly terms with his elder brother and gave him complete loyalty and allegiance. Muhammad was an active and enterprising ruler and, although he ruled at Ghazni as almost an independent ruler, he inscribed the name of his brother on his coins and treated him as his suzerain. It is this man, known to us as Muhammad Ghuri, who became the third important Muslim invader of Hindustan.

Causes of Muhammad's invasions

Muhammad of Ghur, ruler of Ghazni, was an ambitious and enterprising prince. He looked upon himself as the heir to the Panjab which had belonged to the empire of Ghazni. A quarrel between his house and that of Ghazni must have prompted him to invade the Panjab, then under a prince of the house of Mahmud, named Khusrav Shah or Khusrav Malik. Moreover, it was necessary to obtain possession of the Panjab in order to fight successfully his chief enemy, the ruler of Khwarizm, with whom, too, the Ghurides had a long-standing conflict. It was not only desirable but necessary to eliminate the enemy in the rear, that is, the Ghaznavide ruler of Lahore and the Karmathians of Multan. That was an age of military glory, and Muhammad of Ghur was fired with the love of conquest and power. Like all able and ambitious men, he wanted to establish a big empire and to acquire wealth and prestige. He was also a pious Muslim and, as such, he considered it to be his duty to bring the message of Muhammad to the Hindus of India and to put an end to idolatry. It must, however, be mentioned that Muhammad of Ghur was more political than religious. His primary aim, therefore, was conquest and not the propagation of Islam, though that was desirable and was to follow as a matter of course.

Conquest of Multan and Sindh

His first invasion was directed against Multan in 1175 A.D. That province was ruled over by Ismailian heretics who were

popularly known as Karmathians. Muhammad captured the city and appointed his own governor. He then pushed on to Uch in Upper Sindh. The story that it was under a Bhatti Rajput, whose queen fell victim to Muhammad of Ghur's intrigue, poisoned her husband and delivered the place to the invader, is disproved by modern research. It is clear that Bhatti Rajputs had never held any part of Sindh and that the ruler of Uch at this time was most probably a Qaramitah Muslim. Uch fell in the same year at Multan, that is, in 1175 A.D., and most probably by stratagem. Desirous of completing the subjugation of the whole of Sindh and annexing it, Muhammad invaded Lower Sindh in 1182 A.D. and compelled its Sumra ruler to acknowledge his suzerainty.

Muhammad defeated at Anhilwara

Muhammad's next expedition was directed against Anhilwara or Patan, the capital of Bhima II, the Vaghela ruler of Gujarat. The chief of Anhilwara was then young in years, but he was brave and dashing and was the master of a big force. He inflicted, in 1178 A.D., a terrible defeat upon Muhammad and drove him away from his country. This produced such an impression upon the invader that he did not threaten Gujarat for twenty years to come.

Acquisition of the Panjab : end of the Ghaznavide rule

Muhammad now realised that it was a mistake to attempt to conquer India through Sindh and Multan. The key to Hindustan lay through the Panjab, and so he changed his tactics and decided to proceed through the Panjab into the heart of our country. He attacked and captured Peshawar from the Ghaznavide ruler of the Panjab in 1179 A.D. Two years later he proceeded against Lahore itself. Khusrav Malik sent the invader costly presents and his own son as a hostage. This easy success must have encouraged Muhammad in his aggression. In 1185 A.D. he again invaded the Panjab and plundered the countryside and occupied the fortress of Sialkot. He repaired this fortress and garrisoned it with his own troops. Khusrav Malik at last realised that the invader was bent upon wresting the whole of the Panjab from his feeble grips and so he exerted himself in self-defence. He made an alliance with the Khokhars, a Hindu tribe of the Salt Range region, who were on bad terms with Chakra Deva, the ruler of Jammu. With their help Khusrav Malik besieged Sialkot, but was driven back by Muhammad's garrison. In 1186 A.D. Muhammad returned to the Panjab and laid siege to Lahore. He had already

made an alliance with Chakra Deva, and he is said to have invaded the Panjab and garrisoned Sialkot in response to an invitation from that Hindu raja. Inspite of the assistance from Jammu under its new ruler, Vijaya Deva, Muhammad did not feel himself powerful enough to take Lahore by force. So he resorted to diplomacy and cunning. He persuaded Khusrav to pay him a visit and guaranteed him safe conduct. In flagrant violation of his plighted word, he seized Khusrav and sent him a prisoner to Gharjistan, where he was put to death by his orders in 1192 A.D. Thus Multan, Sindh and Lahore became parts of the empire of Ghur, and the Ghaznavide rule disappeared from the Panjab. Muhammad's occupation of this province opened the way for further conquests in India.

His contact with Hindustan

Muhammad of Ghur's territory now touched the boundary of the kingdom of Prithviraj, the valiant ruler of Ajmer and Delhi. The Rajputs had some experience of the Muslim Turks since the days of Sabuktigin and Mahmud of Ghazni and seemed to have had a better appreciation than their ancestors of the eleventh century of the aggressive tendencies of their new neighbours, though it will be incorrect to say that they had grown wiser by this contact. They had experience of occasional thrusts by an enterprising commander of the decadent house of Ghazni at Lahore. These thrusts had made the Rajputs alive to the Turkish menace. Some of the Rajput rulers, notably those of Kanauj and Ajmer, had put their armies in proper trim and invaded the outlying districts of the Ghaznavide province of the Panjab. Mention has already been made of the capture of Hansi and of Bhatinda by the Chauhans. In view of this experience, the Rajput rulers of Hindustan could not have been taken by surprise as they were, two centuries before, by the plundering hordes of Mahmud of Ghazni.

Muhammad's defeat at Tarain

The first Rajput ruler who felt the pressure from the invading hordes from Ghur was the Chauhan prince of Ajmer who ruled the territory from Ajmer to Delhi and was, therefore, responsible for the defence of our north-western frontier. The Chauhans had fortified important towns on this frontier right up to Bhatinda in order to be able to gaurd the entrance into Hindustan against any possible invasion from the north-west. Muhammad of Ghur made his first

attack on the fortress of Bhatinda and besieged it in 1189 A.D. Prithviraj did not seem to have been ready, and the attack probably was a surprise attack. The garrison was defeated and had to surrender, Muhammad stationed his own men in the fortress under a commander, named Zia-ud-din, and, when the sultan was about to return, Prithviraj appeared in the vicinity of the fortress to recover it. Prithviraj's army is said to have comprised two lakhs of cavalry and thirty thousand elephants, which is clearly an exaggeration. Muhammad had to turn round to face the valiant Chauhan and a battle was fought near the village of Tarain, situated near Bhatinda, in 1191 A.D. Prithviraj's troops attacked the sultan with vigour and inflicted upon him a terrible defeat. Muhammad himself was wounded seriously. He was helped to ride his horse by one of his Khalji officers and was taken away from the field. Prithviraj besieged the fortress of Bhatinda, but it took him thirteen months to recover it from Zia-ud-din, its commandant.

Prithviraj defeated at Tarain

This was Muhammad of Ghur's second defeat at the hands of the Hindu rulers of Hindustan. It caused him greater humiliation than the one he had suffered at the hands of Bhima Deo II of Anhilwara. On return to Ghazni, he "never slumbered in ease, nor walked but in sorrow and anxiety." He made furious preparations for avenging the defeat and, when these were complete, he started again for Hindustan at the head of a select force which consisted of one lakh and twenty thousand picked cavalry. On reaching Lahore, he sent an envoy, named Qiwam-ul-mulk, to Prithviraj, asking for his submission. This was done in order to gain time for completing his preparations, to cajole Prithviraj and to keep him off his guard. Muhammad gained his first objective. The brave ruler of the Chauhans could not, however, be easily befooled. He rushed towards Bhatinda and appealed to some of his brother Rajput rulers to hurry up to his assistance. With a combined force numbering, according to Farishta, five lakhs of horse and three thousand elephants (which must be greatly exaggerated), Prithviraj met the invader on the same field (Tarain). Muhammad divided his army into five divisions, four of which were sent to attack the Rajput army on all sides, while the fifth was kept in reserve. "The Sultan," writes Minhaj-us-Siraj, "drew up in battle array, leaving his main body in the rear, with the banners, canopies and elephants, to the number

of several divisions. His plan of attack being formed, he advanced quietly. The light-armed horsemen were made into four divisions of ten thousand and were directed to advance and harass the enemy on all sides, on the right and on the left, in the front and in the rear, with their arrows. When the enemy collected his forces to attack, they were to support each other, and to charge at full speed. By these tactics the infidels were worsted, the Almighty gave us the victory over them, and they fled." The Rajputs fought with great gallantry, but Muhammad of Ghur's tactics proved to be too great for them when they were tired as the result of an offensive directed on them from all sides. Muhammad despatched his reserve at the end of the day to launch a vigorous attack on our exhausted troops. This proved to be too much even for the Rajputs who gave way. Prithviraj's chief lieutenant, Khande Rai, who had been responsible for defeating and wounding Muhammad of Ghur in 1191 A.D., was killed. Prithviraj became dejected. He alighted from his elephant and mounted a horse and made an attempt to escape from the field, but was captured near the town of Sarasuti, and Muhammad of Ghur achieved victory.

There is more than one version about the time and manner of Prithviraj's death. According to Minhaj-us-Siraj, he was captured and 'sent to Hell'. Hasan Nizami, however, tells us that he was taken to Ajmer where he was put to death sometime after, as he was found guilty of treason. This view seems to be correct. There are in existence some of the coins of Prithviraj which bear the Sanskrit superscription 'Hammira', indicating that he had accepted Muhammad's suzerainty and had lived for some time after the second battle of Tarain. Chand Bardai's version that he was taken to Ghazni and put to death for having slain Muhammad of Ghur himself has no foundation in fact.

Results of the second battle of Tarain

The second battle of Tarain is a landmark in the history of India. It proved to be a very decisive contest and ensured the ultimate success of Muhammad of Ghur against Hindustan. The Chauhan military power was completely broken. Immediately after his success at Tarain, the Ghur captured Hansi, Kuhram and Sarasuti, which were places of military importance. They were now garrisoned by the Turks. Muhammad of Ghur planted a foreign Turkish kingdom in the heart of Hindustan for the first time in our

history. He, however, realized that, for various reasons, it was not possible to take direct charge of the administration of Prithviraj's dominions. Therefore, he recognised Prithviraj's son on condition of his accepting the position of a vassal. Similarly the Tomara prince, who was Khande Rai's successor, was allowed to remain in charge of Delhi. A Turkish force was, however, established at Indraprastha, near Delhi, in the charge of Muhammad's most trusted lieutenant, named Qutub-ud-din Aibak. In all the conquered places, Hindu temples were destroyed and mosques erected in their places. In accordance with the Muslim practice, Islam was installed everywhere as the religion of the state. At Ajmer idol temples were demolished and the famous college of the Chauhan ruler, Vigraharaja, was converted into a mosque.

Bulandshahr, Meerut and Delhi acquired by Aibak

After this remarkable success Muhammad of Ghur returned to Ghazni, leaving Aibak in charge of his new conquest. During his absence there was a serious rising in Ajmer. Obviously, the Chauhans made an attempt to recover their independence and to drive away the Turks. A Hindu chief, called Jatwan, besieged the Turkish garrison at Hansi. Aibak proceeded to the relief of the garrison there. He defeated the rebel chief, pursued him and slew him at Bagar. Next, Qutub-ud-din Aibak captured Baran or Bulandshahr from the Dor Rajputs by treachery. The Dor chief, Chandrasena, put up a very brave resistance, but one of his relations, named Ajaipala, who had been won over by Aibak by a huge bribe, assisted the enemy and brought about the ruin of his family. Aibak followed up this success and captured Meerut where he established a Turkish garrison. In 1193 A.D. Aibak captured Delhi from the Tomara ruler on the pretext that the latter harboured hostile designs against the Turkish army of occupation. From that year (1193 A.D.) Delhi became the capital of Muhammad of Ghur's possessions in India.

Second rising in Ajmer

Our people had not taken kindly to the Turkish rule, for it was foreign and Muslim. The spirited Hari Raja, brother of Prithviraj, seized the occasion of Muhammad's absence and besieged Ranthambhor where Qutub-ud-din Aibak had established a garrison under Qiwam-ul-mulk. Some of the Chauhans drove away Prithviraj's son, who had accepted the Turkish vassalage, from Ajmer. Aibak was obliged to proceed against the Chauhans and he succeeded

in relieving both Ranthambhor and Ajmer and restoring his master's Chauhan vassal to the throne of Ajmer. The valiant Hari Raja, however, could not be defeated. At this very time occurred another rising of the Dor Rajputs and it obliged Aibak to cross the Yamuna a second time and capture Koil (Aligarh) in 1194 A.D.

Defeat of Jai Chand of Kanauj

When Aibak was busy in quelling Rajput rebellions, Muhammad of Ghur once again marched his army into Hindustan. This time his object was to fight Jai Chand, the ruler of Kanauj and Banaras who has been described by the Muslim writers to have been the greatest Hindu king of that time. On his near approach Qutub-ud-din joined him with the Delhi troops and, at the head of the united force, Muhammad proceeded towards Banaras. Jai Chand, the Gahadwara king, who had disputed with Prithviraj the overlordship of northern India and had not assisted the latter against the Turkish invader from Ghur, was compelled to fight single-handed. His scouts had a skirmish with the enemy, but were defeated. Then Jai Chand himself moved forward and met the invader near Chandawar on the Yamuna between Kanauj and Etawah. He launched a very vigorous attack on the enemy who was perplexed and was about to break down when the Raja was struck in the eye by a fatal arrow and killed. This threw his army into confusion and Muhammad of Gur was lucky enough to gain victory. He took immediate advantage of the confusion in the rank of our army caused by Jai Chand's death, rallied his men and turned the confusion into a rout. This occurred in 1194 A.D. The victory of Chandawar, like that of Tarain, added a great kingdom to Muhammad of Ghur's empire. The victor immediately proceeded to Banaras and occupied it. This place was Jai Chand's favourite residence and here Muhammad acquired a huge treasure which he carried on 1,400 camels. Some other important towns in the Raja's dominions were also captured without delay, as they contained the Gahadwara treasures. The capital city of Kanauj, however, could not be taken till 1198 A.D. The descendants of Jai Chand continued to rule over a fraction of their kingdom which Muhammad did not consider himself powerful enough to occupy at this time. It seems that even Kanauj was recovered by the Gahadwaras a few years after its conquest.

Third rising in Ajmer

Muhammad now returned to Ghazni. During his absence

there were many rebellions which Qutub-ud-din was required to quell. The first of them occurred in the vicinity of Koil (Aligarh). It was due, probably, to the independent spirit of the Dor Rajputs. Qutub-ud-din had to proceed from Delhi to the relief of the garrison there, which work he accomplished with success. The next rebellion occurred in and around Ajmer. This was the third attempt of the Rajputs, particularly the Chauhans, to put an end to their slavery and to drive away the Turks from Rajasthan. The soul of the rebellion was the redoubtable Hari Raja, the hero of the two previous exploits, who drove out his nephew from Ajmer and made preparations to attack Delhi. Aibak was obliged to move quickly towards Ajmer so as to intercept the Rajputs who were on their march towards Delhi. Jhat Rai, the commander of this army, afraid of being overtaken by Aibak, retreated and took shelter in the strong fort of Ajmer where he was joined by Hari Raja. Aibak besieged the place and Hari Raja, owing to fear of eventual starvation, burnt himself on a funeral pyre. Aibak re-entered Ajmer, removed Prithviraj's son and appointed a Turkish governor in his place. Prithviraj's son was given Ranthambhor.

Capture of the Gwalior fortress

In 1195-96 A.D. Muhammad undertook another expedition and directed his energy against Bayana which was then the capital of the Jadon Bhatti Rajputs. The ruler, Kumarapala, entrenched himself in the fort of Thangir, but was obliged to surrender. The forts of Thangir and Vijayamandirgarh were then occupied by the invader, garrisoned with Turkish troops and placed in the command of Bahaud-din Tughril. Tughril established a military station at Sultankote in order to use it as the base of operations in the plains. Having accomplished this work, Muhammad besieged Gwalior which, however, was so formidable a fortress that it could not have been taken without a prolonged siege. Not prepared to compromise his reputation, Muhammad withdrew from Gwalior on the promise of its ruler, Sulakshanapala, to acknowledge his suzerainty. But Muhammad violated this agreement and within a short time sent Tughril of Bayana to capture the impregnable fortress. This Turkish adventurer cut off Gwalior's communications all round and completely isolated it from the plains so that hardly any provisions could reach the garrison. The Rajputs fought for a year and a half, but eventually agreed to evacuate the fort which was occupied by Tughril.

Fourth rising of Rajasthan

The Rajputs had not reconciled themselves to the foreign rule. In 1196 A.D. they made the fourth attempt to throw off the Turkish yoke. The initiative was taken by the Mers who, together with the Chauhans, invited the Chalukya ruler of Anhilwara to make a concerted effort to expel the Turks. They besieged the Turkish garrison at Ajmer which issued frantic appeals to Aibak for help. Aibak rushed to the place, but was defeated by the Rajputs and compelled to take shelter inside the walls of Ajmer where he was besieged by the allies. Luckily for him, however, a contingent of troops arrived from Ghazni which obliged the Rajputs to raise the siege. Now it was Aibak's turn to retaliate. He planned an invasion of Anhilwara, the capital city of the Chalukya Rajputs of Gujarat. The Chalukyas prepared to receive Aibak at the foot of the Abu mountain. They were cleverly drawn by Aibak from the strategic place at which they had entrenched themselves to the plain below where a battle was fought. Aibak won the day, due primarily to the superior mobility of his troops and the shock-tactics that he employed in the course of the conflict. He followed up his success by plundering Anhilwara which was evacuated by the Chalukya king, Bhim II. Farishta says that he appointed a Turkish officer as governor of Anhilwara which must be incorrect; but even if he appointed any, the man was obliged to flee, for we find the entire Chalukya kingdom, including Abu, in the hands of its legitimate ruler till as late as the year 1240.

Conquest of Bundelkhand

The next three or four years were utilised by Aibak in planning and undertaking a number of petty expeditions. In 1197-98 A.D. Aibak captured Badaun from a Rashtrakuta Rajput. Then he re-occupied Banaras which had been lost after its first conquest. In 1197 A.D. he re-occupied Chandawar and Kanauj. Next year, Aibak is said to have over-run a part of Malwa. His work, however, in that part of Rajputana and Malwa proved to be of no lasting value. By this time most of central Hindustan had passed into the hands of the Turks. There, however, remained one important imperial Rajput ruling family still at large and independent. This was the Chandela family of Bundelkhand. Its northern boundary had touched the Turkish dominion and Turkish adventurers were

carrying out frontier raids ever since the occupation of Banaras and other parts of the Gahadwara territory. In 1202-3 A.D. Qutub-ud-din Aibak invaded Kalinjar which was the military capital of the Chandela king, Paramardi Deva. The Chandelas fought with great courage and gallantry; but, owing to the numerical superiority of the enemy, were obliged to take refuge in the fort. The siege lasted for a long time and so wearied Paramardi Deva that he was found willing to accept the Turkish suzerainty, but he died before the agreement could be signed. Ajaya Deva, his chief minister, withdrew the offer and continued resistance. He had enough of provisions inside the fort and was assured of abundant water from a hillside spring. The Turks, realising the strength of the Chandelas, probably from local spies, cunningly diverted the course of the spring. Ajaya Deva suddenly found the garrison in the fort short of water. So he begged for terms and was allowed to evacuate Kalinjar. Thus Kalinjar, Mahoba and Khajuraho were occupied and constituted into a military division.

Conquest of Bihar

At this very time when stray places in central Hindustan were gradually being subdued by Qutub-ud-din Aibak, one of his ordinary commanders named Ikhtiyar-ud-din Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji, was planning the conquest of the eastern provinces of our country. This commander was of ungainly build and ugly looks and had not been able to secure an employment commensurate with his ability and ambition. In fact, he was refused service at Ghazni and Delhi owing to his forbidding looks. So he enrolled himself in the service of Malik Hisam-ud-din Aghul-Bak who was in charge of Awadh. Here he showed ability, daring and resourcefulness and was, consequently, rewarded with an assignment of the villages of Bhagwat and Bhiuli. This furnished him with the means of enlisting a force of adventures who were mostly Khaljis like himself from the eastern border of Afghanistan. At the head of these reckless bands he would carry on frequent raids in the province of Bihar, east of the river Karmanasa. The region had been weakened and its administration completely disorganised after the fall of the Gahadwaras of Kanauj and Banaras. It, therefore, offered an alluring temptation to Ikhtiyar-ud-din who earned fame and wealth by his repeated incursions into the country. In one of these expeditions, he pushed on as far as Uddandapur Vihara which he

plundered and destroyed. This place was a university town and was guarded by but a few armed men who were hustled out of his way. The inhabitants, most of whom were Buddhist monks, were now put to the sword and the town occupied, and a great library taken possession of. Historians differ regarding the fate of this library. There is no definite record to show that it was burnt. But books were of no value to the Turkish adventurers who had no respect for an alien literature. It is probable that they were destroyed. Ikhtiyar-ud-din followed up his success by capturing Vikramasila and Nalanda, two other university towns, and by building a fortress at Uddandapur. This took place in 1202-3 A.D.

Conquest of Bangal

Ikhtiyar-ud-din was so emboldened by this success that he planned the conquest of Bangal which was ruled by Lakshmana Sena of the Sena dynasty. The ruler of Bangal was not only an old man, but also absolutely lethargic and negligent of his duties. Inspite of the repeated raids of Turkish adventurers on his western frontier, he had failed to take even ordinary precaution to safeguard his territory. He had done absolutely nothing to defend his vulnerable frontier in the west against the aggressive Turks. Ikhtiyar-ud-din was fully aware of the imbecility of king Lakshmana Sena and his utter neglect of military administration. He, therefore, decided to try his luck in that region. Sometime in 1204-5 A.D., he started at the head of his army and, passing swiftly through the jungles of Jharkhand in South Bihar, he appeared suddenly at Nadia which was one of the two capitals of Bangal and the place of residence of its king. Ikhtiyar-ud-din's march was so rapid that his army was left behind and, it is said, only eighteen troopers could keep pace with him (to Nadia). The adventurers cut down the guards at the gate of the palace and made a forcible entry inside the gate. Lakshmana Sena had just sat down to his mid-day meal. The uproar at the gate confused him beyond measure and he fled by the back door of the palace. His flight decided the issue. The Raja's troops could not assemble in time and make an attempt to defend the palace. Meanwhile, Ikhtiyar-ud-din's army had arrived and taken possession of the town without any opposition. As usual, the Turks indulged in indiscriminate slaughter and plundering and acquired immense riches. Then he moved towards north and

INDIA IN 1206 A.D.
Muhammad of Ghur.

TRANS-OXIANA
Bukhara
Samarqand
CHINA
TIBET
Balkh
Ghur
Herat
Waihand
KASHMIR
Kabul
Ghazni
Peshawar
Srinagar
AFGHANISTAN
Nandanah
Sialkot
Kandahar
Lahore
Firozpur
Multan
Sadsuti
Kalat
Bhatinda
Tarain
Samana
Thaneshwar
Uch
Hansi
Delhi
Meerut
CHAUHAN
Koil
Badaun
NEPAL
Sehwan
Jaisalmer
Nagaur
Thungir
Chandwar
Kanauj
Ajmer
Bayana
TIRHUT
Mansura
Amarkot
Ranthambhor
Gwalior
Jalor
Nadol
Banaras
Thatta
Mahoba
Patliputra
PALAS
Debal
Abu
Kalinjar
Uddandapur
Lakhanauri
Anhilwara
Chittor
Gaya
Vihar
SENAS
CHALUKYAS
PARAMARAS
Bhilsa
CHANDELAS
Nadia
Sonargaon
Jabalpur
Dwarika
MALWA
KALACHURIS
Satgaon
Chatgaon
Somanath
Asirgarh
Doman
YADAVAS
Jaynagar
Deogiri
Thana
Bombay
Chaul
Kalyani
KAKATIYAS
Rajamundry
Dabhol
Warangal
Raichur
Karnul
Karwar
HOYASALAS
Kanchi
Kampil
Dwarasamudra
Tanjore
PANDYAS
Madura
CEYLON
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL
ANDAMAN Is.

— Boundary of the Ghuri Empire.
---- Extent of Conquests Over-run by Aibak

0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles

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established himself at Lakhanauti near Gaur. Lakshmana Sena took shelter in eastern Bangal where he continued to rule for some time.

Ikhtiyar-ud-din made no attempt to conquer and occupy the whole of Bangal. He decided to conquer Tibet and China instead, which, however, was not within the bounds of possibility. He suffered greatly in this enterprise in March, 1206. His army was also completely destroyed. He was brought back to Devakot almost a half-dead man and was treacherously slain by one of his own lieutenants, named Ali Mardan Khalji.

Muhammad of Ghur's death : his achievements

Muhammad of Ghur was called back to his country (Ghazni) in order to meet his Central Asian enemies, leaving Qutub-ud-din Aibak in charge of his conquest in India. He gained some success against the encroachment of the Khwarizm Shah who was his chief rival in Central Asia. But it was short-lived. The Khwarizmi army, supported by Qara-Khitais, inflicted a crushing defeat on Muhammad at Andhkhud in 1204. It was with great difficulty that he could save himself and retreat to his capital of Ghur. He was obliged to conclude a defensive alliance with Ala-ud-din Khwarizm Shah whereby he resigned his claim to all his conquests in Central Asia, except Herat and Balkh. The news of Muhammad's defeat at Andhkhud spread like wild fire and it was rumoured that he himself had been killed in the battle. This led to a general rising among the turbulent people of the Panjab. The situation was worsened by the defection and disloyalty of one of the officers of Muhammad, named Aibak-bak, who killed the governor of Multan and established himself as an independent ruler of the place. The Khokhars and other turbulent tribes, who resided in the country between Lahore and Ghazni, broke into an open rebellion and began plundering the districts between the Chenab and the Jhelam. They made an attempt to capture Lahore. The roads became infested with rebels and the revenues from the Panjab could not be sent to Ghazni. Muhammad of Ghur was obliged to proceed to the Panjab in order to chastise the rebels. He sent urgent instructions to Qutub-ud-din Aibak to join him at the Jhelam. Aibak was besieged by the rebels on the way, but he succeeded in defeating and dispersing them and joining his master. Muhammad, accompanied by Aibak, came to Lahore and after setting its affairs began his return march to Ghazni. While he was encamped at a place called Damayak and

engaged in evening prayers, he was assassinated on 15th March, 1206, by some Shia rebels and Hindu Khokhars.

Muhammad of Ghur was, without doubt, inferior in military ability to Mahmud of Ghazni. Unlike the latter, he suffered a number of defeats at the hands of Indian rulers. He could not equal Mahmud in grandeur and influence. But in practical statesmanship, constructive ability and actual achievements he was far superior to that notable ruler of Ghazni. Like Mahmud, he quickly perceived that the political condition of India was rotten; but while Mahmud helped himself to its riches, Muhammad devoted himself to conquering quite a considerable extent of the country and establishing an empire. Wealth for its own sake had no attraction for him. He wanted territory which he desired to bequeath to his successors. In short, Muhammad's aim was loftier than that of Mahmud.

The causes of his success were his ability to gauge the situation and master it, and his steadfast determination to pursue his objective relentlessly. Moreover, he possessed patience and the quality of not accepting a defeat as final. He realised that he had little chances in Central Asia against his great rival, the Khwarizm Shah; so, like Babar after him, he concentrated all his ability and strength on acquiring a foothold in India. He was a judge of human character and patronised his slaves who fully justified his choice and confidence. Though he had no son of his body to inherit his vast dominion in India, his slaves, like Qutub-ud-din Aibak and others, were there to carry on his work. Muhammad was not a mere soldier. He was not indifferent to culture and had scholars and poets like Fakhr-ud-din Razi and Nizami Uruzi at his court. He was the real founder of the Turkish empire in India.

Causes of our defeat

A curious student might well enquire about the causes of our defeat at the hands of Mahmud of Ghazni early in the eleventh century and at those of Muhammad of Ghur at the end of twelfth century. British writers of Indian history, such as Elphinstone, Lane-Poole and Vincent A. Smith have ascribed Indian defeat to our inferiority as soldiers and to the superiority of the Turks who came from the cold climate of the north, were eaters of meat and used to warfare. This view seems to be superficial and inspired by political considerations. The Indian soldier has been superb all through our history. Even during the period of our slavery and decadence our

troops showed their mettle in the fields of battle in various parts of the world. It is a matter of common knowledge that during the World Wars I and II the Indian soldier covered himself with glory in Europe, Africa and Asia. It is too much to believe that his ancestor, who was more free and who fought for a national case, was in any way inferior. The theory that makes the people of a cold climate fighters or that which seeks to show that non-vegetarians are necessarily better fighters need not be examined here at length. Suffice it here to say that it does not stand the test of scientific examination. Moreover, our soldiers in the age of Mahmud of Ghazni and of Muhammad of Ghur were not absolute vegetarians, as they are not even today. The causes of our defeat must, therefore, be sought somewhere else. It will be well to divide them into two categories, namely, (1) general causes and (2) particular causes. As regards the general causes, our political disunity must be held primarily responsible. Each prince had to fight single-handed and he fought for his own kingdom and territory, as it were, and not for his country and people. Even in the moments of our greatest crisis our rulers did not combine to put up a united defence against the invader. Lack of political unity and proper organisation and capable leadership must, therefore, remain the most important general cause of our helplessness and defeat. In the second place, our army organisation was based on out-worn conception. They were ill-organised and ill-equipped. Our military leaders did not keep themselves in touch with the development of tactics. This has been the bane of Indian history through the ages. While foreign countries were forging ahead in the field of military development, our people remained stationary. We were, therefore, out-classed in weapons and outmanoeuvred in tactics. The great Mughul emperor, Babar, noted in his diary in 1526 that Indians knew how to die and not how to fight. That is, they were brave and did not shudder from the thought of sacrificing their lives in the field, but they lacked the capacity of taking advantage of the enemy's weakness and making use of feints and manoeuvres in the battle-field. The Rajputs prided themselves on their swordsmanship and looked upon a battle as a tournament in which to display their skill, bravery and chivalry. The Turks, on the other hand, fought to win and believed that everything was fair in war. Thirdly, the masses of our people did not really co-operate with our leaders and soldiers.

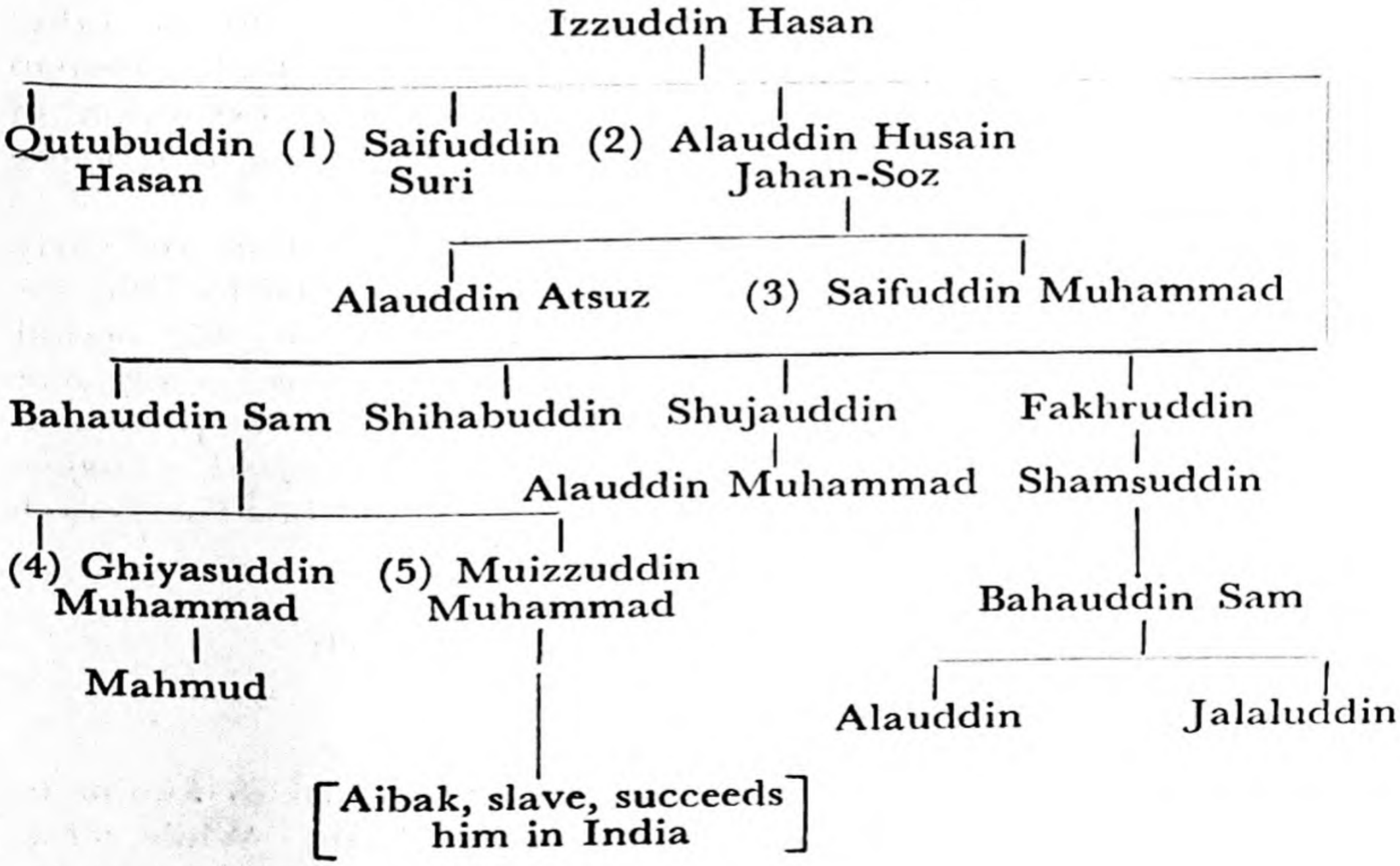
Not that they were altogether indifferent to them. On the other hand, they laboured under a mistaken notion that it was none of their business to fight. They seemed to believe that their lot would remain the same, it did not matter who occupied the throne of Delhi. Had the people become the second line of defence behind our troops, the Rajput rulers would not have staked everything on the issue of a single contest and must have made repeated attempts at resistance. Fourthly, both Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad of Ghur, the former on a much larger scale than the latter, made use of shock-tactics to dishearten and demoralise our countrymen. With lightning rapidity they swooped down upon our troops and fair cities and devastated the land with fire and sword. These tactics were repeated times out of number and so much terrified our people that they began thinking that Mahmud of Ghazni's troops were invincible. Political and military demoralisation, therefore, set in among the Indians of that age and made them think that resistance against the Turkish hordes was useless. It was this feeling that paralysed our society in that age. Fifthly, the Turks were inspired by a great religious and military enthusiasm, while our people had no such ideology to sustain them in their hour of trial. Mere physical strength and military weapons do not constitute the total equipment of an army. An inspiring ideology is as essential as military training and equipment.

As regards the particular causes, it is not possible to notice them here in detail. The Turkish invader almost invariably acquired a correct knowledge of the strength of his adversary and made full endeavours to exploit his weakness. Our rulers did not care to find loop-holes in the organisation of their common enemy. The Sultans almost every time had the survey of a prospective battle-field made and took the geography into consideration before engaging in a conflict. Our rulers divided their armies into three traditional divisions—right, centre and left—and they almost invariably made a frontal attack on the enemy, whereas the Turkish invaders had five divisions, the two additional ones being the Advance Guard and the Reserve. The Reserve was kept in readiness to launch an attack when the Sultan found our army in its last gasps. One often comes across the Turkish invaders defiling a tank or a river from which our troops drew their water supply or diverting the course of a channel so as to deprive them of water. They

ravaged the territory in the vicinity so as to cut off supplies of grain and to starve their opponents. No contemporary Muslim writer, however, makes any mention of any of the Indian rulers of his time having recourse to such tactics or stratagems against the invader. Above all, our rulers committed many a silly mistake. We have already mentioned a few such mistakes committed by king Dahir of Sindh. Similar mistakes were committed by Jayapala of the Panjab and by other rulers of northern India. Jayapala burnt himself on a funeral pyre in order not to survive his disgrace, instead of preparing himself afresh for a further contest. Very often, elephants in a battle, in which arrows were used, proved a liability rather than an asset. They were frightened and fled from the field. Our people fought mainly with sword, while the favourite Turkish weapon was archery. The mobile Turkish cavalry was more than a match for the slow Indian mares and mountain-like elephants.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE

The Shansbani Dynasty



9

QUTUB-UD-DIN AIBAK AND HIS SUCCESSORS

The Slave Dynasty : a misnomer

Muhammad of Ghur had no son. At Ghazni he was succeeded by Ala-ud-din, who was soon displaced by Mahmud bin Ghiyas-ud-din. In his Indian dominions he was succeeded by his most prominent slave, named Qutub-ud-din Aibak, who laid the foundation of a new dynasty which is popularly known as the Slave Dynasty. Besides being a contradiction in terms, the title is historically inaccurate. Three dynasties ruled over Delhi during the period beginning from 1206 and ending with 1290, and not one, as is commonly supposed. The founders of these dynasties, namely, Qutub-ud-din Aibak, Iltutmish and Balban, had not descended from a common ancestor. The founders of these dynasties, but no other member, had been slaves in their early career. They had ceased to be slaves before they became king and, with the exception of Qutub-ud-din, all had obtained their formal manumission long before their accession.

There is another popular misconception regarding the early Muslim kings of India The entire period from 1206 to 1526 has wrongly been called the 'Pathan Period'. The rulers of this period right upto 1451 were Turks and not Pathans or Afghans. Only one dynasty, which exercised sway over Delhi from 1451 to 1526, was Pathan by race. Hence it is a misnomer to call the period (1206—1526) 'Pathan Period'. Its appropriate name should be 'The Period of the Sultanate of Delhi'.

QUTUB-UD-DIN AIBAK, 1206—1210

His early career

Qutub-ud-din Aibak, the real founder of the Turkish dominion in India, was born of Turkish parents in Turkistan. While yet a boy, he was carried a slave to Nishapur where he was purchased by the local *qazi*. When his first master died he was sold by his sons

INDIA IN 1210 A.D.
Qutubuddin Aibak.

TRANS-OXIANA
Bukhara
Samarqand
Balkh
Qunduz
Ghur
MONGOLS
Herat
Kabul
Ghazni
YULDUZ
Kandahar
Kalat
QUBACHAN
Multan
Uch
Bhakkar
Sehwan
Mansura
Amarkot
Thatta
Debal
Jaisalmer
Nagaur
Ajmer
Jalor
Nadol
Abu
Chittor
Anhilwara
CHAUHANAS
Waihand
KASHMIR
Srinagar
Peshawar
Nandanah
Sialkot
Lahore
Dipalpur
Jalander
Kangara
Sarhind
Tarain
Hisar
Hansi
Delhi
Meerut
Baran
Badaun
Mathura
Koil
Chandwar
Kanauj
Sambhar
Ranthambhor
PRATIHARAS
Gwalior
Jhansi
Mahoba
Prayag
Kashi
Ayodhya
NEPAL
CHINA
TIBET
KAMARUPA
Lakhanauti
Patliputra
Gaya
KHALJIS
Nadia
Sonargaon
Chatgaon
BURMA
Kalinjar
CHANDELAS
Bhilsa
Ujjain
PARAMARAS
Gorhmandal
KALACHURIS
CHALUKYAS
Somanath
Broach
Manau
Dhar
YADAVAS
Deogiri
Jajnagar
ARABIAN SEA
Bombay
Chaul
Thana
Dabhol
Kolyani
Warangal
KAKATIYAS
Rajamundry
BAY OF BANGAL
Raichur
Sandabur
Karwar
HOYSALAS
Kanchi
Kampil
Dwarasamudra
Calicut
Tanjore
PANDYAS
Madura
CEYLON
ANDAMAN IS.

——— Boundary of the Empire.

----- Extent of Ghuri Empire.

0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles

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once again and became eventually a slave of Muhammad of Ghur. While at Nishapur he had learnt riding and acquired training as a soldier in the company of the *qazi's* sons, besides picking up elementary reading and writing. At Ghazni he attracted his new master's notice by his courage, manly bearing and, particularly, by his generosity. He gave proof of his loyalty and devotion to duty and was promoted to be a commander of a section of his master's army. Next, he was appointed master of the stables (*Amir Akbur*). After the second battle of Tarain in 1192, Muhammad placed him in charge of his Indian conquests, with full powers to act during his absence. Aibak made Indraprastha near Delhi his headquarters.

During his master's absence Qutub-ud-din crushed a rebellion in Ajmer and Meerut in 1192. Next, he occupied Delhi which became the future capital of the Turkish dominion in the country. In 1194 he crushed a second rising in Ajmer and then co-operated with his master who returned to India to fight the Gahadwaras of Kanauj. Aibak played an important part in the battle which brought about the defeat and death of Jai Chand. In 1195 Aibak had to proceed to Koil (Aligarh) which he captured, and from there he marched to Ajmer to suppress a third rising there. In this expedition he acquired the famous fortress of Ranthambhor In 1196 Aibak was besieged by the Mers, but he succeeded in extricating himself from the difficult situation and, rapidly proceeding to Anhilwara, plundered and ravaged it. In 1197-98, Aibak captured Badaun and then Chandawar and Kanauj. He occupied himself in operations in Rajputana and subdued the kingdom of Sirohi and probably part of Malwa also—conquests which were not destined to be permanent. In 1202-3 Aibak invaded Bundelkhand and defeated the Chandela king, Paramardi Deva, acquiring Kalinjar, Mahoba and Khajuraho. One of his lieutenants, Ikhtiyar-ud-din Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji, conquered Bihar and a part of Bangal, a mention of which has already been made in the foregoing pages. Before his accession to the throne and his master's death, Qutub-ud-din Aibak was, thus, already in possession of almost the whole of northern India as his master's lieutenant and representative in this country.

Accession

Muhammad of Ghur seems to have desired that Qutub-ud-din Aibak should succeed him in Hindustan. That was why in 1206

he had formally invested him with viceregal powers and conferred upon him the title of *Malik*. When Muhammad's death became known, the citizens of Lahore sent an invitation to Qutub-ud-din to assume sovereign powers. He proceeded from Delhi to Lahore and took up the reins of government in his hands, although his formal accession took place on 24th June, 1206, that is, a little over three months after Muhammad of Ghur's death. It seems that Qutub-ud-din occupied himself during the interval to build up a strong party of his own. In fact, long before his accession he had strengthened his position by a clever policy of matrimonial alliances. He had given his daughter in marriage to Iltutmish and his sister to Nasir-ud-din Qubachah, while he himself had married the daughter of Taj-ud-din Yulduz. On his accession he used the title of Malik and Sipahsalar, but not that of Sultan. He does not seem to have struck coins or read the *khutba* in his name. The reason, perhaps, was that he was still technically a slave. His formal manumission could not be obtained till 1208. But Ghiyas-ud-din Mahmud of Ghur, who was his master's successor, sent him the royal insignia and standard and also conferred upon him the title of Sultan. Whatever might have been the legal flaw, Qutub-ud-din became *de facto* Sultan of the almost entire Hindustan.

Qutub-ud-din as king

Qutub-ud-din ruled for four years. During this period he made no fresh conquests. He did not find time for establishing a sound system of administration. His administration was purely military and rested on the support of the army. Besides a powerful force at the capital, he kept garrisons in important towns in all parts of Hindustan. The local administration was left in the hands of the native officers with old revenue rules and regulations intact. At the capital and in the provincial towns Muslim officers were placed in charge of administration. They were mostly soldiers. There must have been a *qazi* at the capital and probably one in each of the newly conquered provinces. Administration of justice was rough and ill-organised. In short, Qutub-ud-din was not a constructive genius. He does not seem to have laid the foundation of a solid structure of civil administration.

Foreign policy

Qutub-ud-din's entire reign was devoted to foreign affairs. First

of all, he had to reckon with his chief rivals, namely, Taj-ud-din Yulduz and Nasir-ud-din Qubachah, who were in charge of powerful states and posed as his equals. Secondly, the important Hindu chiefs, who had been subdued in the time of Muhammad of Ghur, were anxious to take advantage of his death to regain their lost independence. The Chandela capital, Kalinjar, had been recovered by the Rajputs in 1206. The Gahadwaras, under Harish Chandra, had regained most of their power in Farrukhabad and Badaun. Gwalior had again fallen into the hands of the Pratiharas. Bangal and Bihar were in the throes of a revolution owing to the death of Ikhtiyar-ud-din.

The greatest danger for the infant Turkish kingdom of Delhi, however, was from Central Asia. Alauddin Muhammad, the Khwarizm Shah had his eyes on Ghazni and Delhi. Qutub-ud-din's immediate task, therefore, was to prevent the Khwarizm Shah from occupying Ghazni and Delhi and the Rajputs from recovering their principalities, and to put down the pretensions of his rivals, Qubachah and Yulduz. He addressed himself to the task in all seriousness. To meet the danger from the north-west, Aibak moved from Delhi to Lahore and spent the whole of his remaining life in that town. Taj-ud-din Yulduz had occupied Ghazni on Muhammad of Ghur's death. He was, however, compelled to leave that city and to withdraw towards the Panjab. Aibak successfully resisted Yulduz from acquiring a footing in the Panjab. But he feared lest the vacant Ghazni should be occupied by the Khwarizm Shah Alauddin Muhammad. Deciding to forestall the Shah's designs he proceeded to that city in response to an invitation from its citizens and occupied it in 1208. But he was unpopular. Ghazni was re-occupied by Yulduz. Aibak successfully resisted the claims of Yulduz to the sovereignty of Hindustan. He did not allow to be entangled in Central Asian politics.

The death of Ikhtiyar-ud-din Khalji threatened to severe the connection of Bangal and Bihar with Delhi. Ali Mardan Khan had set himself up as an independent ruler at Lakhanauti, but the local Khalji chiefs replaced him by Muhammad Sheran and threw him into prison. Ali Mardan, however, escaped from confinement, went to Delhi and persuaded Aibak to intervene in the affairs of Bangal. Qutub-ud-din's agent, Qaimaz Rumi, succeeded, though not without difficulty, in persuading the Khaljis to recognise Aibak's

overlordship. Ultimately Ali Mardan became governor of Bangal and he agreed to send to Delhi an annual tribute.

Qutub-ud-din had been so much occupied with the politics of the north-western region and those of Bangal that he could get to pursue a policy of aggressive warfare against the Rajputs. He died, in 1210, of injuries received as the result of a fall from his horse while playing polo. He was buried at Lahore. Over his remains a very unpretentious monument was raised which is hardly worthy of the first independent Turkish Sultan of northern India.

His estimate

Qutub-ud-din Aibak was a great military leader. He was a gifted soldier who had risen from obscurity and poverty to power and fame. He possessed a high degree of courage and intrepidity. He was one of those able and powerful slaves to whom Muhammad of Ghur's success in India was largely due. As has been mentioned, he conquered for his master many important towns and principalities in Hindustan. He could, however, make no conquests during his career as a ruler. This was due to his pre-occupations. Besides being a military leader of ability, he was also interested in literature. He possessed a refined taste and patronised men of learning, such as Hasan Nizami and Fakhre Mudir, who dedicated their books to him. He was also interested in architecture. He built two mosques out of the materials of Hindu temples which he destroyed, one at Delhi, known as *Quwat-ul-Islam*, and the other at Ajmer, known as *Dhai Din ka Jhonpara*. Muslim writers praise his generosity. According to them he was known as *Lakha Buksha*, that is, giver of lakhs; but at the same time, he was also notorious for his killing which, too, was by lakhs. He does not seem to have followed the enlightened policy of religious toleration, though he is said to have twice interceded with Muhammad for the vanquished Hindu princes. He was not a constructive genius. He built no civil institutions and carried out no administrative reform. His greatest achievement was to sever India's connection with Ghazni and thus to put an end to Ghazni's sovereignty over Hindustan.

ARAM SHAH, 1210—1211

Qutub-ud-din's death, occurring as it did within a few years of the foundation of the new Turkish state in India, caused a great confusion among his followers. His officers at Lahore placed his

son, Aram Shah, on the throne. But the citizens of Delhi refused to support the new ruler who was a weak and worthless young man. The citizens of Delhi felt that at that critical period in the history of the Turkish rule the government should be in the hands of a competent soldier and a tried administrator. So, headed by the chief magistrate, they sent an invitation to Iltutmish, governor of Badaun and a son-in-law of Qutub-ud-din, to come and accept the crown. Iltutmish accepted the invitation. Aram Shah would not willingly resign the throne, and he prepared to fight Iltutmish. Nasir-ud-din Qubachah, who was governor of Uch in the time of Qutub-ud-din, prepared to take advantage of the confusion and rivalry between Iltutmish and Aram Shah. He proceeded to Multan and brought it under his control. Ali Mardan Khalji of Bangal ceased to pay homage to Delhi. During Aram's rule, thus, the newly established Turkish kingdom in India was parcelled out into four independent states. Aram was supported by the people of Lahore with whose help he proceeded against Iltutmish who had crowned himself king at Delhi. He was, however, easily defeated and perhaps put to death. Aram Shah's inglorious reign lasted for about eight months.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE

The Qutubi Dynasty

(1) Qutub-ud-din Aibak

(2) Aram Shah — Daughter m. Iltutmish

10

ILTUTMISH AND HIS SUCCESSORS

ILTUTMISH, 1211—1236

Early career

The full name of Iltutmish was Shams-ud-din Iltutmish. He was born of noble Turkish parents of the Ilbari tribe of Central Asia and was, in early boyhood, sold as a slave by his envious brothers. He was purchased by a merchant, named Jamal-ud-din, who took him to Ghazni. Then he was brought to Delhi and sold a second time, now to Qutub-ud-din. Iltutmish had signs of promise on his forehead from his very boyhood. Unlike Aibak, his master, he was handsome. He had received training as a soldier and had also learnt reading and writing. It is said that Muhammad of Ghur was much impressed and recommended him to Qutub-ud-din Aibak in these words : "Treat Iltutmish well, for he will distinguish himself." Henceforth Iltutmish's rise was rapid. He was promoted from position to position till he became the master of the royal hunt (*Amir Shikar*). After the conquest of Gwalior he was placed in charge of that fort. Next, he was promoted to the governorship of Baran (Bulandshahr). Qutub-ud-din gave his daughter in marriage to him and, subsequently, appointed him governor of Badaun. He became king in 1211.

Iltutmish not a usurper

As the throne of Delhi did not belong to him by right, Iltutmish has been called a usurper by some modern writers. But, in fact, he was not a usurper "for the simple reason that there was nothing to be usurped."[1] At that time there was no unified Turkish state in the country, as we have shown, and Hindustan, which had been recently conquered by the Turks, was divided into four independent principalities, namely, Lahore, Badaun, Lakhanauti and Multan and Uch. Iltutmish was a candidate of the nobility and officials of Delhi which had assumed the position of the premier city

[1] See Tripathi's *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration*, p. 25.

INDIA IN 1236 A.D.
Shamsuddin Iltutmish.

TRANS-OXIANA
Bukhara
Samarqand
PERSIA
Balkh
KHWARIZM EMPIRE
Ghur
Herat
Kabul
Ghazni
Kandhar
Waihand
KASHMIR
Srinagar
CHINA
Peshawar
Baniyan
Nandanah
Sialkot
Lahore
Jalandar
Multan
Sarasuti
Bhatinda
Terain
Hisar
Hansi
Thaneshwar
Delhi
Bijnor
Ahichhatra
Baran
Badaun
Farrukhabad
NEPAL
TIRHUT
Bahraich
Kanauj
Ayodhya
Agra
Mathura
Thungir
Bayana
Gwalior
Ranthambhor
Jhansi
Mahoba
Kashi
Patliputra
Gauhati
KAMARUPA
Lakhanauti
Gaya
Nadia
Sopargaon
Chatgaon
BURMA
TIBET
MONGOLS
Kalat
Uch
Bhakkar
Sehwan
Jaisalmer
Nagaur
Mansura
Mandor
Jodhpur
Ajmer
Amarkot
Bharmer
Jalor
Nadol
Thatta
Abu
Chittor
Anhilwara
CHALUKYAS
Somanath
Ujjain
PARAMARAS
Bhilsa
Dhar
Mandu
Jabalpur
Khajuraho
Kalinjar
CHANDELAS
Asirgarh
YADAVAS
Deogiri
KALCHURIS
Jajnagar
KALINGA
Thana
Bombay
Chaul
Kalyani
KAKATIYAS
Warangal
Rajamundry
Dabhol
Raichur
Sandabur
Karwar
HOYASALAS
Kanchi
Kampil
CHOLAS
Dwarasamudra
Calicut
Tanjore
PANDYAS
CEYLON
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL
ANDAMAN Is.

Boundary of the Empire

Territory Inherited

0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles

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of Hindustan, while his rival, Aram Shah, was supported by a party at Lahore which was not so important as the party at Delhi. Iltutmish, moreover, was a great military leader and had already established his reputation as a man of affairs and as an administrator. He was not a slave at this time, for, long before he had obtained his letter of manumission from Qutub-ud-din. He was possessed of great energy and ability and was more sober, religious-minded and moderate than even Qutub-ud-din. According to Islamic law, sovereignty belonged to one who was the fittest person. Aram Shah was a mere weakling as compared with him. Hence under the circumstances he was the best choice for the throne of Delhi.

His early difficulties

When Iltutmish became king, the Sultanate of Delhi was almost non-existent. He found himself master of Delhi and Badaun and the outlying districts extending from Banaras in the east to the Sivalik hills on the west. The Panjab was hostile to him. Kubachah was master of Multan and he extended his kingdom to include Bhatinda, Kuhram and Sarasuti. Taking advantage of the quarrel between Aram Shah and Iltutmish, he even seized Lahore. Bangal and Bihar severed their connection; Ali Mardan of Lakhanauti set himself up as an independent ruler. Rajput rulers, who had been vanquished by Muhammad of Ghur and Qutub-ud-din, refused to send tribute and repudiated allegiance. Jalor became independent and so also Ranthambhor. Even Ajmer, Gwalior and the Doab threw off the Turkish yoke. Taj-ud-din Yulduz re-asserted his claims to the sovereignty of entire Hindustan. Even in Delhi the atmosphere was intriguing. Some of the royal guards at the imperial city (Delhi) entered into an alliance with Aram Shah's party and rose in rebellion. Thus at his accession Iltutmish found the throne of Delhi to be very precarious indeed.

Contest with Yulduz

Finding his position insecure Iltutmish dissembled. Realist that he was, he chose to compromise with Yulduz who advanced his claims for the sovereignty of entire Hindustan and treated Iltutmish as his vassal. Iltutmish pretended to recognise Yulduz as his overlord and accepted from him the regal insignia, that is, the canopy and the mace. By clever diplomacy and tact he put down Aram Shah's party in Delhi and brought the Turkish guard under

his control. When he found himself free from internal difficulties, he turned to settle his scores with Yulduz who had expelled Qubachah from Lahore and occupied the greatest part of the Panjab. Iltutmish's anxiety was not to give an occasion to Alauddin Muhammad, the Khwarizm Shah, to claim Hindustan as a dependency of Ghazni. That is why when Yulduz was driven out of Ghazni by the Khwarizm Shah in 1215 and took shelter in Lahore, Iltutmish marched against him and inflicted upon him a crushing defeat on the field of Tarain. Yulduz himself was taken captive and sent a prisoner to Badaun where he died soon after. This victory completed Aibak's work. The severance of Delhi's connection with Ghazni was complete. The Sultanate of Delhi became a sovereign state in fact, though not yet in theory. Iltutmish, however, allowed Lahore to remain in the hands of Nasir-ud-din Qubachah, which was annexed to Delhi two years later (1217).

The Mongol menace

The infant Turkish state of Delhi was at this time threatened by a Mongol invasion. Under their great warrior leader, Temujin,[2] popularly known as Changiz Khan, the Mongols issued from their home in the uplands of Tartary and completely destroyed the Khwarizm empire which they occupied. The Khwarizm Shah was driven to the Caspian coast, while his heir-apparent, Jalal-ud-din Mangbarni fled towards the Panjab. The Mongols, though Buddhists (Shamanists), were a terrible people. They gave a relentless pursuit to Mangbarni, who entered the Panjab and established himself in the Upper Sindh Sagar Doab. He secured the assistance of the powerful Khokhar chief by marrying his daughter in his projected expedition of the conquest of the north-western Panjab and Multan. With the help of the Khokhars, Mangbarni drove away Qubachah and occupied Sindh Sagar Doab. He even encroached upon the territory of the Ravi and the Chenab regions and captured the fort of Pasrur in the Sialkot district. Then he advanced up to Lahore and sent an envoy to Iltutmish with an appeal for shelter. Iltutmish was on the horns of a dilemma. It was discourteous to refuse asylum to a princely refugee; but, at the same time, it was unwise to invite such a powerful invader as Changiz Khan. The

[2] For the life and achievements of Changiz Khan refer to *The Mongol Empire* by Machael Prawdin, London, George Allen & Unwin, pp. 210-30.

Mongols had reached the Indus as early as 1220 in pursuit of Mangbarni. Moreover, Iltutmish's policy was not to allow the Delhi kingdom to be dragged into Central Asian politics. For these reasons, he sent a polite refusal to Mangbarni and requested him to withdraw from the Panjab. The Khwarizm prince felt insulted and prepared to avenge himself by encroaching upon Iltutmish's territory in south-eastern Panjab. Thereupon, the latter got ready for a fight in order to drive away the aggressor; but Mangbarni thought it wise not to come into conflict with Iltutmish. On the other hand, he made an attempt to capture Multan from Qubachah. Iltutmish's wise policy removed a great danger which was threatening to engulf Delhi. Changiz Khan, who was probably not desirous of violating a neutral state, returned from Afghanistan. Delhi was thus saved. Had he chosen a different course, the Sultanate of Delhi would have been finished in its infancy. But the country, in all likelihood, would have gained, for the Mongols, unlike the Turks, would gradually have merged in Hindu society as they were Shamanists and had much in common with the Indian people.

Defeat and death of Qubachah

As the Mongols had returned from Afghanistan, Mangbarni left India after three years' stay in 1224. The net result of his sojourn in the Panjab was the destruction of Qubachah's power. Sindh Sagar Doab and part of Multan passed into the hands of the Khwarizm troops. The south-eastern portions of Qubachah's dominion, which had originally been parts of Delhi, were now easily recovered by Iltutmish who thus captured Bhatinda, Kuhram and Sarasuti and the country along the Hakara river. After Mangbarni's withdrawal, only Multan and Sindh were left to Qubachah. Iltutmish, anxious to take the fullest advantage of the effect produced by the movements of the Khwarizm troops on Qubachah's power, planned a double attack on the latter's territory from two different directions. First, he made arrangements to recover Lahore. Then in 1228 he sent two armies, one from Lahore to attack Multan and the other from Delhi to capture Uch. Qubachah was perplexed and he fled to the fortress of Bhakkar on the lower Indus. Uch fell into the hands of Iltutmish after three months' siege. Qubachah was thus closely invested in Bhakkar. He offered to negotiate. Iltutmish demanded his unconditional surrender for which Qubachah was not prepared. Then a vigorous assault was made on Bhakkar

which so much terrified Qubachah that he desperately threw himself into the Indus and was drowned. This took place in 1228. Multan and Uch were now occupied and annexed to Delhi. The Sumra ruler of Debal, namely, Sinan-ud-din Chanisar, offered submission to Iltutmish. The states of Multan and Sindh thus became an integral part of Delhi.

The newly conquerred territories were constituted into three provinces, that is, the provinces of Lahore, Multan and Sindh. The province of Lahore did not include the whole of the Panjab. The limit of Iltutmish's territory was Sialkot in the north. The Sindh Sagar Doab was in the hands of the Khokhar tribe and the region known as Baniyan, which lay to the west, was in the hands of Saif-ud-din Hasan Qarlugh, a lieutenant of Jalal-ud-din Mangbarni. The governors of these three provinces were required to extend the boundary of the Delhi kingdom so as to include the whole of the Panjab. A number of expeditions were planned by them. One of these resulted in the occupation of the fortress of Nandanah in the Salt Range. In spite of his military activity and vigilance, Iltutmish's hold on the Western Panjab was not effective.

The recovery of Bangal

The supremacy of Delhi over Bangal had been re-asserted by Qutub-ud-din Aibak. But after his death, Ali Mardan, the Khalji ruler, had declared his independence. He was a tyrant. The Khaljis, therefore, rose in revolt and put him to death. The throne of Bangal now passed to Husam-ud-din Ewaz. He assumed the title of Sultan Ghiyas-ud-din. He was an able and popular ruler. He annexed Bihar and exacted tribute from the neighbouring Hindu states of Jajnagar, Tirhut, Vanga and Kamarupa. Iltutmish would not tolerate the existence of an independent ruler in a province which had originally been a part of the Delhi kingdom. As soon as he was free from the Mongol threat, he sent an army to recover Bihar. In 1225 the Sultan himself took the field. Ewaz accepted Iltutmish's sovereignty and agreed to pay an indemnity and an annual tribute without fighting. Iltutmish appointed Malik Jani governor of Bihar, but as soon as Iltutmish's back was turned, Ewaz re-asserted his independence. Iltutmish was obliged to send his son, Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, governor of Awadh, to punish Ewaz. Nasir-ud-din captured Lakhanauti in 1226, and then defeated and killed Ewaz. Bangal thus once again became a province of Delhi.

Nasir-ud-din Mahmud died soon after and there was again a revolution at Lakhanauti which brought Balka Khalji to the throne of that province. Iltutmish was, therefore, obliged to plan a second expedition to Lakhanauti in 1230. Balka was defeated and killed and Bangal re-annexed. Iltutmish separated the provinces and appointed two governors, one for Bangal and the other for Bihar.

Rajasthan throws off the Turkish yoke

During the period that followed Aibak's death our people made a vigorous attempt to throw off the foreign yoke. Everywhere the Rajputs mustered courage and did their best to drive away the Turkish governors. The Chandelas recovered Kalinjar and Ajaigarh. The Pariharas drove away the Muslim garrison from Gwalior, re-occupied the place and extended their rule to include Narwar and Jhansi. The Chauhan ruler of Ranthambhor expelled the Turkish troops and imposed his sovereignty over Jodhpur and the adjacent areas. The Chauhans of Jalor reconquered Nadol, Mandor, Bharmer, Ratnapur, Sanchor, Radhadhara, Khera, Ramasin and Bhinamal and defeated the Turks. In northern Alwar, Jadon Bhattis established their supremacy. Ajmer, Bayana and Thangir also put an end to the Turkish supremacy and re-asserted their independence.

Iltutmish's operations in Rajputana

The lost of a considerable portion of the Delhi kingdom must have unnerved the Sultan's administration; but Iltutmish was not the man to fear or falter. He was determined to recover the lost provinces. As soon as he was free from the threat of Mongol invasion, he put his armies in motion and commenced the work of reconquest. In 1226 he proceeded into the heart of Rajasthan and besieged Ranthambhor. It was recaptured and re-garrisoned. Then he advanced to Mandor, the capital of the Paramaras, which, too, was recovered and garrisoned. In 1228 or 1229 he besieged Jalor. The Chauhan chief, Udai Singh, offered a stout resistance. He was, however, obliged to surrender; but was allowed to continue as the ruler of Jalor on agreeing to pay a tribute. Next, Bayana and Thangir were recovered. Then came the turn of Ajmer which, along with Sambhar and other adjacent districts, was re-occupied, but not without resistance. Nagaur in Jodhpur, which had been in Turkish hands from the time of Ghaznavide Sultan Bahram but was

lost on Qutub-ud-din's death, was next recovered. In 1231 Gwalior was besieged. Malayavarma Deva, the Parihara ruler, fought stoutly for one full year, but eventually gave in.

Malik Tayasai, governor of Bayana and Gwalior, was deputed to conquer Kalinjar. The Chandela ruler, Trilokyavarma, could not withstand the Turkish forces and left Kalinjar which was plundered; but the invader could make no progress and was so overwhelmed by the Chandelas of the vicinity that he had to flee. Besides the above conquests, Iltutmish personally led an attack on Nagada, the capital of the Guhilots. The ruler of the place, Kshetra Singh, defeated the Sultan and drove him away with heavy losses. Iltutmish made another unsuccessful attempt on the Chalukyas of Gujarat where, too, his forces suffered a reverse and were compelled to retire. In 1234-35 Iltutmish led an expedition to Malwa, plundered Bhilsa and Ujjain and destroyed the ancient temple of Mahakal. The Paramaras, who ruled over those regions, did not suffer any territorial loss. Some modern historians, notably Sir Woolseley Haig, credit Iltutmish with the conquest and annexation of Malwa, which is far from true. His expedition to that province was a mere raid and not a war of conquest.

Reconquest of the Doab

The people of the region between the Ganga and the Yamuna, known as the Doab, did not lag behind those of Rajasthan in taking advantage of the difficulties of the Turkish ruler of Delhi. While Iltutmish was overwhelmed by the rebellion of the Turkish guards, many of the districts of the modern Uttar Pradesh re-asserted their independence. The districts of Badaun, Kanauj and Banaras passed out of the hands of the Turks. The province of Katehar (modern Rohilkhand) severed its connection with Delhi. From all these parts Turkish soldiers were driven out. As soon as Iltutmish had established his authority at Delhi, he undertook operations against the Hindus of these parts. One by one, Badaun, Kanauj and Banaras were reconquerred. The province of Katehar, with its capital Ahichhatra (modern Aonla), was captured. Then an army was sent to Baharaich, north of the river Ghaghra which, too, was reduced to submission. Awadh, too, had thrown off the Turkish suzerainty, and it was very necessary to recover it. After a very tough struggle it was brought back under the supremacy of Delhi. But the new governor, Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, the eldest son of

Iltutmish had to wage a ceaseless war against the local tribes who put up a stout resistance in defence of their liberty and religion. The leader of these people was a chief, named Bartu (or Pirthu), who was an extremely brave and daring warrior and had repeatedly defeated the Turks and slain about 1,20,000 of the enemy troops. The province could be finally reduced only after Pirthu's death. Expeditions were also undertaken to Chandawar and Tirhut; but the latter does not seem to have been annexed.

His death

Iltutmish was taken ill while undertaking an expedition against Baniyan. He abandoned the project and returned to Delhi, a sick man. The physicians failed to cure him and he died in his place in April 1236.

His character and achievements

Iltutmish was a brave but cautious soldier. He was also a successful general. Among his notable qualities courage, sagacity, moderation and foresight must be given a prominent place. He was also an able and successful administrator. For one who had been the slave of a slave in his early life, it was no mean achievement to have risen to the throne of Delhi and occupied it for a quarter of a century. Unlike his master and predecessor, Qutub-ud-din Aibak, Iltutmish did not enjoy the moral and material support of a great empire. All his achievements were his own. He began almost from the scratch. He took up Qutub-ud-din's unfinished work and built up a powerful Turkish kingdom in northern India. He recovered the territories conquered by Muhammad of Ghur in Hindustan and added to them a considerable territory in Rajputana and the northern parts of the modern Uttar Pradesh. Qutub-ud-din had lost Multan and Sindh; they were recovered and annexed to the Delhi kingdom. He added a great moral prestige to the territorial conquests of the Turkish Sultanate. He saved it from the threat of a terrible Mongol invasion before which the older and more mighty kingdoms of Central Asia had fallen with a terrible crash. Besides, he reduced his Turkish rivals to submission and imposed the Sultan's will upon them. He laid the foundation of a military monarchy which reached a high watermark of despotism under the Khaljis.

Iltutmish was the first Turkish ruler to introduce a purely Arabic coinage. His silver *tanka* weighed 175 grains and bore an

Arabic inscription on it. He appreciated merit in learned men and was fond of architecture. He built the famous Qutub Minar at Delhi.

Iltutmish was a pious Musalman. He was regular in the observance of the five daily prayers and all other rites of his religion. He was intolerant of Muslim heretics, such as, the Shias. The Ismaili Shias of Delhi rebelled against the policy of persecution and plotted against his life, but the rebellion was suppressed and they were put to death in large numbers. His treatment towards the Hindus could not have been better.[3] The very fact that contemporary Muslim writers extol his piety and his service to religion is enough to show that he must have continued the policy of religious persecution against the vast majority of his subjects. In fact, he gave satisfaction to the Muslim *ulema* and harnessed them to the service of the Sultanate. Iltutmish was not a builder of civil institutions. He was not a constructive statesman. Like Qutub-ud-din, he allowed the old indigenous institutions to continue, substituting for them Islamic ways and practices only at the top.

The most notable achievements of Iltutmish were three—(1) saving the infant Turkish kingdom from destruction, (2) giving it for the first time a legal status, and (3) perpetuating his dynasty by ensuring the succession of his children to the throne of Delhi. In February 1229, he was invested with the robes of an Islamic king by the Khalifa, Al-Mustansir Billah, which gave religious and political sanction to his political authority. He has been called the first king of the Sultanate of Delhi owing to the above-mentioned solid achievements. In fact, he occupies the first place among the rulers of the three dynasties that occupied the throne of Delhi from 1206 to 1290.

RUKN-UD-DIN FIROZ SHAH, 1236

Iltutmish's eldest son, Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, who was also the ablest among his children, died in 1229, leaving his father prostrate. The Sultan did not think his next son, Firoz, competent to succeed him, as he was lazy and irresponsible and thoroughly devoted to sensual pleasures. His other sons were very young. So he decided to nominate his eldest daughter, Raziah, who was an intelli-

3 He destroyed the chief temple at Bhilsa and the great temple of Mahakal at Ujjain, which had taken 300 years in building and was a marvellous work of art. He carried the statues of Vikramaditya and of other notable rulers made of molten brass to Delhi. See *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* (translated by Raverty), pp. 622-23.

gent, courageous and able woman, as heir-apparent. But this was a novel experiment and was not supposed to be in consonance with the spirit of the Muslim Law. Moreover, his sons and their followers were likely to oppose it. But Iltutmish overbore all opposition and managed to ensure the approval of his nobles and courtiers. The occasion was celebrated by including Raziah's name on the silver coin, *tanka*. But, when Iltutmish died, his decision was reversed and the throne passed to his eldest surviving son, named Rukn-ud-din Firoz. This young man was very openhearted and his mother, Shah Turkan, was a clever intriguer and had a large following of courtiers and officers. She displayed great activity on Iltutmish's death and had her son crowned with the support of her party. Perhaps, like his father, he would have ruled a long time, had he shown moderation and administrative qualities. But, immediately after his accession, he began a life of gaiety and pleasure and allowed his mother to usurp power. Shah Turkan, originally a handmaid in the *harem*, was inordinately ambitious. She controlled the state policy and persecuted her co-wives and their children. Firoz squandered money on his personal hobbies and scattered gold among the populace of Delhi. The result was a reaction. Internal and external troubles followed immediately. Sindh and Uch were invaded by Saif-ud-din Hasan Qarlugh, the ruler of Ghazni, Kirman and Baniyan. A party of officers rose against the new king. The king's own brother, Ghiyas-ud-din, governor of Awadh, openly rebelled and seized a convoy of treasures from Bangal and plundered several towns in Hindustan. The governors of Multan, Lahore, Hansi and Badaun entered into a pact to depose Firoz and proceeded towards Delhi. Firoz was obliged to march out of the capital to meet the rebels. During his absence Raziah exploited the public discontent against him and his mother. She appeared before the public in red robes at the time of Friday prayers and appealed to the people for help against the much-hated Shah Turkan. The people were reminded of Iltutmish's nomination of her as heir-apparent. The army officers gave their support to the people of Delhi and, before Firoz could return, Raziah was placed upon the throne and Shah Turkan was thrown into a dungeon. Firoz was arrested and put to death in November 1236. His reign had lasted only for seven months.

RAZIAH, 1236—1240

Raziah became ruler in name only. She had the support of the people and nobility of Delhi; but the governors of the provinces of Badaun, Multan, Hansi and Lahore, who had no hand in her election, were definitely hostile. They were joined by Firoz's wazir, Nizam-ul-mulk Muhammad Junaidi. The confederates besieged Raziah in her capital. Though powerless against this combination, she adroitly played her game of diplomacy. She sowed dissension among the confederates. The rebel governors fell out among themselves and the confederacy was broken. Raziah now fell on them. Two of the confederates were taken prisoners and slain. The wazir fled to save himself, but died a fugitive in Sirmur hills.

Raziah's triumph brought her great prestige and stabilised her position. She redistributed the high offices of the state and appointed Khwaja Muhazab-ud-din her wazir. She made fresh appointments to the posts of governors of the provinces. The entire Hindustan from Lakhanauti to Debal submitted to her. Bangal also came back under Delhi. But Raziah's very success proved to be the chief cause of her downfall. She had taken steps to make the power of the crown absolute. The Turkish nobles, who had formed themselves into a military brotherhood and monopolised all power in the State since the time of Qutub-ud-din Aibak, would not tolerate a very powerful and despotic monarch who was pursuing the policy of making her will supreme. They considered themselves to be indispensable and would not allow the sovereign to occupy a higher place than that of the chief among the peers. Moreover, Raziah seems to have given offence to the orthodox Muslim opinion by casting off female attire and the seclusion of the harem. She dressed herself as a man, rode in public and transacted business in the open court. She took steps to emphasise the firmness and vigour of her rule. She commanded armies and took part in battles. Such conduct in a woman, though a queen, appeared scandalous to the hoary Turkish warriors. She is also said to have shown an undue preference for an Abyssinian officer, Jamal-ud-din Yaqut, who held the office of her master of the horse. Probably, this was the result of her deliberate policy of breaking the Turkish nobles' monopoly of all important posts in the kingdom.

The fall of Raziah

The above causes led to a conspiracy against the queen. The

leaders of the conspiracy were the *amirs* and *maliks* at the court and in the provinces. They wanted to depose Raziah and to replace her by a ruler who should be weak and abide by their wishes. The leader of the conspiracy was Ikhtiyar-ud-din Aeitigin who held the high office of the queen's lord chamberlain (*amir-i-hajib*), and the other prominent members were Malik Altunia, governor of Bhatinda, and Kabir Khan, governor of Lahore. Aware of Raziah's military strength and the loyalty of troops to her, the conspirators wanted to decoy her to a distant place and to finish her off there. In pursuance of this plan, Kabir Khan, governor of Lahore, revolted early in 1240. The queen proceeded quickly to put down the rebellion. Kabir Khan was defeated and he fled. His progress was, however, barred by the presence of the Mongols at the river Chenab. So he returned and surrendered to the queen unconditionally. Raziah returned victorious to the capital. But the conspirators would not give up their design. Their next rebellion took place within a fortnight of Raziah's return. This time Altunia, the governor of Bhatinda and a friend of the lord chamberlain, raised the standard of revolt. Inspite of the heat of the season, Raziah was again on the march against the rebels. This time, however, the conspirators played their game with consummate skill. As soon as Raziah reached Bhatinda, some agents of the conspirators abused Yaqut (Raziah's master of the horse) and put him to death. The queen's party was thus weakened; and, perhaps, she was found in a state of mental confusion. The conspirators now laid their hands on her and threw her into prison (April 1240). They raised Bahram, Iltutmish's third son, to the throne. The conspirators returned to Delhi. They had won in the contest against the crown.

In the redistribution of offices that took place on the accession of Bahram, Altunia did not get what he had expected. He, therefore, became disaffected. He thought of a plan to avenge himself. In August 1240, he released Raziah from the prison fort of Bhatinda, married her and proceeded with her to Delhi to capture it by force. But they were defeated by Bahram's army and compelled to return towards Bhatinda. Their troops had deserted them and near Kaithal they were murdered by some Hindu robbers on 13th October, 1240.

An estimate of Raziah

Raziah was the only Muslim woman who sat upon the throne

of Delhi. Although her reign was brief, lasting barely for three years and a half, she was, without doubt, a very successful and extraordinary ruler. She was brave and energetic. She was a good soldier and general. She was adept in the arts of political intrigue and diplomacy. She succeeded in restoring the prestige of the Turkish kingdom in India. She raised the power of the crown and made it absolute. In fact, she was the first Turkish ruler of Delhi to have imposed the royal will upon the *amirs* and *maliks*. Qutub-ud-din was the chief noble among the nobles. Iltutmish was shy to sit upon the throne in the presence of his peers. Other members of the dynasty of Iltutmish, both before and after her, were much weaker in personality and character. Raziah was, therefore, the first and the last ruler of Iltutmish's dynasty to dominate the politics of the Sultanate of Delhi by sheer force of her ability and character. The contemporary historian, Minhaj-ud-din Siraj, describes her as "a great sovereign, and sagacious, just, beneficent, the patron of the learned, a dispenser of justice, the cherisher of her subjects and of warlike talent, and.....endowed with all admirable attributes and qualifications necessary for kings." He concludes his estimate of the queen with the lamentation : "Of what advantage were all these excellent qualifications unto her ?"

It is usually believed that the cause of Raziah's fall was her sex, as the Turkish nobles did not like to be ruled by a woman. But the primary cause of her downfall seems to have been the determined ambition of the Turkish military aristocracy to keep the ruler of Delhi a tool in their hands and to retain the monopoly of power for themselves, whereas Raziah had all through followed the opposite course of making herself supreme in the kingdom and concentrating power in her hands. Her sex was only a secondary cause of her premature end.

MUIZ-UD-DIN BAHRAM SHAH, 1240—1242

The new king was Iltutmish's third son. He had been raised to the throne on the definite understanding that he would allow the Turkish *maliks* and *amirs* to exercise full power and that the king would only reign and not govern. He was also required to allow the Turkish nobles to nominate the king's deputy, that is, *naib-i-mamlikat*, a new post created at the time. Ikhtiyar-ud-din Aeitigin was appointed to this high office. Muhazab-ud-din remained the

wazir, but his post now sank definitely to secondary position. The supremacy of the Turkish military aristocracy was now complete.

The *naib-i-mamlikat*, Aeitigin, usurped much of the power formerly wielded by the sultan. He even appropriated some of the royal prerogatives, such as playing *naubat* at his gate and keeping an elephant. He married a sister of Bahram and easily became more important and powerful than the king himself. Bahram could not put up with the encroachment on his prerogatives. He, therefore, had the naib murdered in his office. But the king's triumph was short-lived. Although no new naib was appointed, yet the lord chamberlain (*amir-i-hajib*) Badr-ud-din Sunqar, who was an influential member of the Turkish aristocracy, known as 'the Forty' appropriated all the power formerly wielded by the naib. The sultan became jealous of him. The wazir was already against Sunqar. The two made a common cause against the *amir-i-hajib* who, on his part, plotted for the deposition and death of the king. The wazir divulged the plot to the sultan who dismissed Sunqar and banished him to Badaun. As Sunqar returned to the court without permission, he was arrested and put to death. The Turkish nobles, who were alienated against the sultan as a result of Aeitigin's murder, got thoroughly alarmed. The Turkish *ulema* (ecclesiasticals), too, were hostile, as one of them was put to death by the king's orders. The wazir, Muhazab-ud-din, had his own score to settle with his sovereign. An all-pervading conspiracy was hatched. At this time the Mongols invaded the Panjab and besieged the city of Lahore in 1241. An army was sent for the relief of the city. The wazir, who had accompanied it, revealed to the officers that the sultan had sent secret orders for their arrest and execution. The army was filled with rage and, vowing vengeance on the sultan, returned from the way to depose him. The citizens of Delhi fought desperately but they were no match for regular troops. The city fell the next day. Bahram was seized and put to death in May 1242.

ALA-UD-DIN MASUD SHAH, 1242—1246

The ascendancy of the Turkish aristocracy was fully established and the crown again suffered a defeat at their hands. The victorious nobles would have raised one of their own number to the throne if jealousy had not prevented them from recognising the merit in the ablest among them. Consequently, they raised to the throne

Ala-ud-din Masud Shah, a very young son of Rukn-ud-din Firoz Shah and a grandson of Iltutmish, on the condition that he would abide by the agreement made by his predecessor. He was to delegate all power to 'the Forty' and himself to enjoy the title of Sultan. The naib's post was recreated and given to Malik Qutub-ud-din Hassan, a refugee from Ghur. Other high posts were monopolised by the members of 'the Forty'. The wazir Muhazab-ud-din dominated the court and exercised the power which was formerly held by the naib, while the naib was reduced to a secondary place. There was soon a quarrel between the wazir and the Turkish aristocracy. Muhazab-ud-din was dismissed and a new wazir in the person of Nazim-ud-din Abu Bakr was appointed. The post of *amir-i-hajib* went to Balban who was destined to reach the throne in the years to come. Balban, though a junior member of the aristocracy, dominated the party by reason of his superior ability and strength of character. Gradually, he appropriated most of the power and diverted the attention of the aristocracy from their mutual quarrels to campaigns against the Rajputs and the Mongols. This policy was so successful that the Turkish state regained some of its prestige and Masud's reign enjoyed comparative tranquillity and lasted for four years.

Yet internal jealousy and trouble did not disappear altogether. The kingdom was torn by dissension and disturbed by rebellions. Tughan Khan, governor of Bangal, repudiated the authority of Delhi. He even annexed Bihar and invaded Awadh. Multan and Uch cut themselves off. In 1245 Multan was invaded and occupied by Saif-ud-din Hassan Qarlugh. The Mongols re-appeared in the upper Panjab. They even proceeded to besiege Uch but were obliged to abandon it as an army of relief was sent from Delhi in time.

The state of affairs, though not satisfactory, was improving and Balban was gradually emerging as the man at the capital. A conspiracy was formed against the sultan by Balban himself in league with Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, another son of Iltutmish, and his mother. The result of the conspiracy was that Masud was deposed and Nasir-ud-din Mahmud was crowned king in June 1246.

NASIR-UD-DIN MAHMUD, 1246—1265

His accession and character

Nasir-ud-din Mahmud was enthroned at Delhi on 10th June, 1246. With his accession the struggle between the crown and the

peers for the possession of real power in the state (which had begun after the death of Iltutmish) came to an end. The Turkish nobility won the contest. Nasir-ud-din Mahmud loyally abided by the tacit agreement and willingly resigned all power in the hands of Balban, the leader of 'the Forty'. The new king was by nature unambitious, docile and even timid. He contented himself with the mere form of royalty and left the substance of authority to his nobles. He was a religious-minded man, but his natural religiosity was accentuated by the memory of the fate that his predecessors had suffered at the hands of the nobility, by the great internal commotion caused by the attempt of the Hindu chiefs to regain their power and by the threat of a foreign invasion by the Mongols. Several anecdotes are related about the piety and simplicity of this ruler. One such anecdote is that his only queen used to cook his meals and, one day, when her fingers were burnt in the kitchen, she complained to the sultan and requested him to provide her with a maid-servant. Nasir-ud-din is said to have refused to comply on the plea that he was only a trustee of the State and could not use public money for his own comfort. These stories are, without doubt, very highly exaggerated. It is inconceiveable that the sultan's wife, who was Balban's daughter, could have no maid-servant. We know that he had more than one wife and many slaves. The only truth in this and the various other anecdotes seems to be that Nasir-ud-din Mahmud probably lived an unostentatious life and spent most of his time in copying the Quran and in doing kindly acts of charity. He could not help it, for it was impossible for him to play the king under the circumstances. The very fact that he entered into a conspiracy with Balban against his nephew and benefactor, Masud, shows that he was not altogether without worldly ambition. But he was sagacious enough to understand his own limitations and the difference between what was possible and what was not. It was the knowledge of this together with his natural character that made him reign for about twenty years and die a natural death in 1265.

Balban : *de facto* ruler, 1246—1252

As Balban was instrumental in raising Nasir-ud-din to the throne, the sultan placed all power in the hands of this leader of 'the Forty'. Abu Bakr seems to have continued as nominal wazir and become a partisan of Balban. The most important offices went to Balban's relatives. His younger brother, Kashlu Khan, was

appointed lord chamberlain (*amir-i-hajib*). His cousin, Sher Khan, was appointed governor of Lahore and Bhatinda. Balban, who had acted as the real prime minister from the very first day of the reign, was formally appointed *naib-i-mamlikat* in 1249. The same year he gave his daughter in marriage to the young sultan which further strengthened his position and raised him head and shoulder above other Turkish nobles. Thus Balban monopolised power and used it for the advantage of himself, his relations and the Turkish state in the country.

Balban's temporary eclipse: Rayhan becomes prime minister, 1253

Balban's ascendancy and his unscrupulous use of power led to the rise of a party against him with Imad-ud-din Rayhan, a Hindu convert, at its head. Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, who seems to have resented the unbridled exercise of authority by his prime minister, became a party to the conspiracy and issued orders for the dismissal of Balban and his brother. They were directed to leave the court and proceed to their respective provinces. A fresh distribution of offices now took place. Rayhan became prime minister. The office of wazir went to Junaidi. The historian Minhaj was removed from the office of chief *qazi* which was given to Shamsh-ud-din. Sher Khan, Balban's cousin, was removed from the governorship of Bhatinda and Multan which were placed under the charge of Arslan Khan. Thus the key positions in the state came to be held by Rayhan's nominees. Rayhan has been condemned for this *coup*. He has been called a 'renegade Hindu', 'a vile upstart', 'a usurper' and 'a conspirator'. The fact, however, is that he was as good a Musalman as any Turk and was neither a ruffian nor a scoundrel. He was a clever politician who exploited the king's dissatisfaction against the arrogant Balban and his party and established his own authority in the latter's place. He was a leader of the party of the Indian Musalmans whose number was growing with rapidity and who had begun taking interest in the politics of the time. The foreign Turks and their partisans were as much hostile to Indian Musalmans as to the Hindus. They could not tolerate an Indian Muslim holding any position of importance in the administration and hence contemporary writers used unbecoming epithets to describe Rayhan's character and his *coup* of 1253.

Re-instatement of Balban, 1254

Rayhan's administration, though popular with the lower classes, could not last long. The Turkish nobles at the court and in the provinces would not tolerate an Indian Muslim as the *de facto* head of the government. They combined under the leadership of Balban and decided to take action. Their united armies proceeded towards the capital in 1254. The sultan, thereupon, issued out of Delhi and encamped near Samana. A contest between the two was imminent but Mahmud lost heart and was obliged to agree to the proposal of the insurgents to dismiss Rayhan (1254). Accordingly, Rayhan was transferred to Badaun and from there, a little after, to Baharaich. Balban was reappointed *naib* and allowed to fill important offices with his nominees. The historian Minhaj got back his post of the chief *qazi*. The ascendancy of the Turkish nobility was now unquestioned and it continued till the end of Mahmud's reign.

Balban suppresses rebellions

Balban now resumed his policy of consolidating the authority of the crown. He decided to put down rebellions and to force the provinces of the Sultanate to return to allegiance. Bangal had for some time been in a disturbed condition. Tughan Khan, the governor, behaved like a king and repudiated the authority of Delhi. He even invaded Awadh. Balban soon found a pretext to interfere in the affairs of Bangal when Tughan Khan, who had been defeated by the raja of Jajnagar in Orissa, appealed to Delhi for help. Balban sent an army for his assistance under Tamur Khan, who was instructed to punish Tughan and take charge of Bangal from him. He was able to accomplish this work. Tughan was compensated by the grant of Awadh and he died immediately after (1246). But Bangal was destined to give more trouble to the ruler of Delhi. One of Tughan's successors in that province, Yuzbak-i-Tughril Khan, assumed regal title, struck coins and read the *khutba* in his name about 1255. But he was killed in an expedition to Kamarupa in or about 1257 after which the supremacy of Delhi over Bangal was re-established. Within three or four years there was again trouble in Bangal. Arslan Khan, governor of Kara, occupied Lakhanauti and ruled Bangal as an independent ruler. The province continued its career of independence till the end of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud's reign.

In the north-west, too, Balban had to deal with rebellious governors. The restoration of the Delhi authority over that region

was imperfect. This was due to three causes, namely, (1) the presence at Baniyan of Saif-ud-din Hasan Qarlugh who was an ambitious ruler and wanted to extend his dominion to Multan and Sindh, (2) the constant pressure of the Mongols, and (3) the disloyalty of the local officers who were anxious to carve out a fortune for themselves by intrigues with Delhi and the Mongols in Persia. In 1249 Saif-ud-din Hasan Qarlugh occupied Multan. He was, however, compelled to abandon it soon after. A few years later, Kashlu Khan, governor of Multan and Uch, repudiated allegiance to Delhi and became a vassal of Hulagu, the Mongol ruler of Persia. He entered into an alliance with another rebellious governor, named Qutlugh Khan of Awadh, and the two made an attempt to capture Delhi. But the project failed owing to the vigilance and activity of Balban. An understanding seems to have been arrived at between Delhi and Hulagu who sent an envoy to Delhi to assure the Sultan that the Mongols would respect the north-western frontier of India. But trouble continued to reign in the Panjab. Even Lahore passed into the hands of the Mongols in 1254. Only a small portion of the Panjab, namely that in the south-east, remained a part of Delhi, while the rest, namely that in the north-west, came under the Mongol sphere of influence. Multan and Sindh, however, remained parts of Delhi.

One of the most difficult tasks of Balban was to resist the numerous Hindu attempts to regain their independence. His first task was to subjugate the disaffected people of the Doab. This kept him engaged for months during which bitter fighting took place. Balban defeated a notable chieftain in the fertile valley of the Yamuna, whom Minhaj calls 'Dalaki-wa-Malaki' identified by H. C. Ray with Trilokyavarma of the Chandela dynasty (*Dynastic History*, Vol. II, pp. 720-30), slaughtered a large number of men and carried away women and children into slavery. Next, he took upon himself the task of chastising the turbulent people of Mewat, the region south of Delhi. Here, too, he displayed his usual brutality. He led numerous expeditions against Ranthambhor which was eventually conquered. In 1247 he suppressed a rising of the Chandela chief of Kalinjar. In 1251 he led an expedition against the Hindu ruler of Gwalior. But he made no attempt to establish Turkish rule in Malwa and Central India.

Death of Nasir-ud-Din Mahmud

No information is available about the last days of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud's reign. The *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*, the only first-rate authority on the period, comes to an abrupt end about the middle of the year 1260, and our next authority, namely, Zia-ud-din Barani's *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi* commences its account from the accession of Balban. The Sultan, however, seems to have lived a peaceful life and died a pre-mature death in 1265 without leaving any male issue. He was succeeded by Balban.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE

The House of Iltutmish

(1) Shams-ud-din Iltutmish

Nasir-ud-din	(2) Rukun-ud-din Firoz	Raziah	(3)	Muiz-ud-din Bahram	(4) Nasir-ud-din Mahmud	Daughter m.
	(5) Ala-ud-din Masud				(7) Baha-ud-din Balban (captures the throne)	(6)

11

BALBAN AND HIS SUCCESSORS

BALBAN, 1265-1287

Early life

The original name of Balban was Baha-ud-din and, like Iltutmish, he was an Ilbari Turk. His father was a Khan of 10,000 families. In his early youth Balban was captured by the Mongols, who carried him to Ghazni and sold him to one Khwaja Jamal-ud-din of Basra. The Khwaja took him to Delhi where he was purchased by Iltutmish. Baha-ud-din showed signs of future promise. Iltutmish enrolled him as a member of the famous corps of 'the Forty Slaves'. His intelligence, ability and loyalty won recognition and he was promoted to be *amir-i-shikar* (lord of the hunt) by Raziah. He offered his co-operation to the nobles who formed a faction against Raziah and assisted them in deposing the queen. Bahram, the next ruler, granted him the fief of Rewari in Gurgaon district in the Panjab. Very soon after, the district of Hansi was added to it. Balban's wise administration of the district seems to have improved the material condition of the people in his charge. He organised an expedition against the Mongols and compelled them to raise the siege of Uch in 1256. He seems to have been responsible for the deposition of Masud and raising Nasir-ud-din Mahmud to the throne. In 1246 he became the principal adviser of the new Sultan. A few years after, he established relationship with the Sultan by marrying his daughter to him. He was now given the title of Ulugh Khan and appointed *naib-i-mamlikat*. His position was further strengthened by the failure of Rayhan's intrigue against him, and he was now the most important man in the Sultanate of Delhi.

Balban's work as the naib of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud has already been given. He usurped all authority, but exercised it in the interest of the crown. As the royal deputy, he infused vigour into the administration and checked the forces of disintegration. He successfully resisted Hindu attempts to recover their lost dominion and freedom, and he checked the Mongol progress in the direction of

INDIA IN 1287 A.D.
Bahauddin Balban.

TRANS-OXIANA
Bukhara
Samarqand
Balkh
Qunduz
Ghur
Herat
Kabul
Ghazni
Kandahar
Peshawar
Nandnah
Sialkot
Lahore
Dipalpur
Multan
Kalat
Uch
Bhatner
Bhatinda
Jalandar
Kangra
Samana
Sunam
Hisar
Hansi
Delhi
Rewari
Sehwan
Nagaur
Ajmer
Bayana
Amarkot
Jodhpur
Jalor
Thatta
Debal
Abu
Chittor
Ranthambhor
Gwalior
Agra
Mathura
Kaul
Amroha
Sambhal
Badaun
Kanauj
Lucknow
Bahraich
Ayodhya
Jaunpur
Kara
Mahoba
Orchha
Khajuraho
Kalinjar
Prayag
Patliputra
Gaya
Lakhanauti
Nadia
Sonargaon
Chatgaon
Bhilsa
Garh
Ujjain
Dhar
Mandu
Asirgarh
Illichpur
Deogir
Thana
Bombay
Chaul
Dabhol
Kalyani
Gulbarga
Warangal
Raichur
Sandabur
Calicut
Kanchi
Dwarasamudra
Tanjore
Madura
Jajnagar
Somanath

MONGOLS
PERSIA
KATEHAR
MEWAT
TIRHUT
KAMARUPA
CHALUKYAS
CHANDELAS
YADAVAS
KALINGA
KAKATIYAS
HOYASALAS
PANDYAS
TIBET
CHINA
BURMA
ANDAMANIS

ARABIAN SEA

BAY OF BANGAL

Ceylon

——— Boundary of the Empire.
- - - - - Territory Inherited.

0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles

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Delhi. His services to the Sultanate of Delhi as naib were indeed great.

His accession

Later writers, like Ibn Battuta and Isami, hold that Nasir-ud-din Mahmud was poisoned by Balban who was anxious to usurp the throne. This story is discounted by some modern scholars. Although Balban was already the *de facto* ruler and Nasir-ud-din Mahmud had no son, he was old and would not wait indefinitely to satisfy his ambition of wearing the crown. He is said, as is hinted by his own son, Bughra Khan, to have poisoned the youthful sultan to attain to his cherished desire. Be that as it may, on Nasir-ud-din Mahmud's death, in 1265, Balban, who was already in possession of power, carried out his enthronement and assumed the title of Ghiyas-ud-din Balban.

Restoration of the Crown's prestige; Balban's theory of kingship

Balban's immediate task was to restore the prestige of the crown. His long political experience had shown him that without the destruction of the pretensions of the Turkish nobility, the crown would enjoy no authority and command no prestige from its subjects. He had seen that the Turkish military aristocracy, of which he was a member, had degraded the Sultan to the position of a mere peer. The historian Barani tells us that during the last days of Nasir-ud-din's rule the office of the Sultan enjoyed no prestige and that people had lost all fear of, and respect for, the king. "Fear of the governing power," remarks the historian, "which is the basis of all good government and the source of the glory and splendour of the State, had departed from the hearts of all men, and the country had fallen into a wretched condition." Balban had resolved to put an end to this sorry state of affairs and to raise the power and prestige of the crown so as to inspire fear in the hearts of all his subjects. Balban believed in a theory which was akin to the theory of divine right of kings. He expounded his views on the subject to his son, Bughra Khan, in these words: "The heart of the king is the special repository of God's favour and in this he has no equal among mankind." On another occasion he emphasised the sacredness of the king's person. He believed in his inherent despotism. His conviction was that unalloyed despotism alone could exact obedience

from his subjects and ensure the security of the State. In order, therefore, to be a successful despot, he sought increased personal prestige for himself by claiming descent from the mythical Turkish hero, Afrasiyab of Turan, and keeping himself in studied aloofness, and cultivated dignified reserve. On his accession he gave up drinking wine and all jovial company. He maintained a very grave demeanour and refused to speak to common people. He regulated the court ceremonial after the Persian model and copied the court etiquette of the Selijuqs and Khwarizmi kings of Central Asia. He appointed tall and fearsome bodyguards who were to stand round the king's person with their swords drawn and dazzling in the sun. He instituted the *sijda* (prostration) and *paibos* (kissing the monarch's feet) in the court as normal forms of salutation for the king. He introduced the annual celebration of the Persian Nauroz to heighten the splendour of his court. He prohibited the drinking of wine by his courtiers and officials, prescribed for them a special dress and a fixed ceremonial from which no deviation was permitted. No one was allowed to laugh or even smile in his *darbar*. Balban submitted himself to these rigid formalities while in public. He would not meet and talk to smaller nobles, to say nothing of ordinary people. He despised men of low birth. A rich merchant of Delhi sought an interview with the Sultan and offered him all his wealth, but Balban refused to see him. When the news of the death of his eldest son, prince Muhammad, reached him, he remained firm and unmoved and went as usual through the daily routine of administration, though in his private apartment he wept bitterly. Thus, by rigid ceremonial and dignity, Balban restored the prestige of the crown. The fact that the Sultanate of Delhi in his days was the only first-rate Muslim State left intact inspite of the Mongol fury and havoc added to Balban's prestige.

The destruction of 'the Forty'

Balban realised that one great impediment in the way of the Sultan's absolute despotism was the presence of the Turkish aristocracy at the head of which stood a select body known as 'the Forty'. This body of the leading Turks had reduced the crown to a mere figurehead and divided amongst its members all the great fiefs of the Sultanate and all the highest offices in the State. It had come into existence in the time of Iltutmish and, in fact, all the members of this body were originally Iltutmish's slaves. The Sultan had

succeeded in preserving the royal dignity and keeping 'the Forty' under proper control. But after his death there was a bitter struggle between 'the Forty' and the Sultan. It was 'the Forty' that won and imposed its will on Iltutmish's successors. In order to make the throne safe for himself and for his descendants, Balban wanted to destroy this organisation. First of all, he promoted junior Turks to important positions and placed them on a position of equality with 'the Forty'. Then he inflicted condign punishments on the members of this group for slight faults in order to repress them and reduce their importance in the eyes of the people. Malik Baqbaq, governor of Badaun and a great noble and a member of 'the Forty', caused one of his servants to be beaten to death. When a complaint was made against him, Balban ordered Malik Baqbaq to be publicly flogged. Another great noble, named Haibat Khan, who was governor of Awadh, was found guilty of killing a man while dead drunk with wine. Balban ordered Haibat Khan to be flogged with 500 stripes and then to be delivered to the widow of the victim. Haibat Khan purchased his freedom by paying 20,000 tankas to the widow and was so overcome with shame that he remained confined to his house till the day of his death. The Sultan ordered Amin Khan, governor of Awadh, who was defeated by Tughril of Bangal, to be hanged at the gate of the city of Ayodhya (Awadh). Balban is said to have poisoned his cousin, Sher Khan, who was an able and prominent member of 'the Forty' and was governor of Bhatinda, Bhatner, Samana and Sunam. The Sultan was jealous of his ability and ambition. After his death there was no potential opponent to the execution of Balban's policy of despotism. By such crooked and barbarous measures he destroyed 'the Forty', and cowed down those of its members that escaped death and dismissal.

Organisation of the spy system

Balban's policy of despotism could be carried out successfully as he was correctly and promptly informed about the happening at the capital and in the provinces and about the ambitious schemes of his nobles and officials. In fact, the efficient working of administration depended upon Balban's spy system on whose organisation he spent much time and money. The king placed secret reporters in every department and appointed secret news-writers in every province and, in fact, in every district. He took great pains in ascertaining the character and loyalty of the news-writers. He gave them good

salary and made them independent of governors and commanders. They were required to transmit to him every day the news of important occurrences. If a news-writer failed to do his duty, he was given exemplary punishment. The news-writer of Badaun who had failed to report the conduct of Malik Baqbaq, was hanged over the city gate. The well-organised system of espionage, thus, became one of the most important instruments of Balban's despotism.

Reorganisation of the army

The main prop of Balban's despotism was his powerful army. He concentrated his attention on its reorganisation. From the time of Qutub-ud-din Aibak, Turkish soldiers had been granted assignments of land in lieu of their services. Some of them had been allotted fiefs before these were conquered and annexed to the Sultanate of Delhi. Iltutmish had followed the old practice of granting land to many soldiers on condition of military service. The successors of these soldiers continued to enjoy their lands although many of them did not perform any military duties, and a good number of them were irregular in rendering service to the state. They looked upon these lands as belonging to them by right. Balban ordered an enquiry into the history of these service-tenures and he found that much of the land was in the hands of old men who were unfit for military service. In many cases widows and orphans held land, but performed no service whatever. He ordered the resumption of these lands from old men and from widows and orphans and gave them pensions in cash. As regards youngmen who were fit for military service, he allowed them to retain their assignments; but the collection of revenue of their villages was to be made by the central government and payment made to them in cash. These orders evoked loud protests from the assignees who approached Fakhr-ud-din, the aged *kotwal* of Delhi and a friend of the king, to intercede on their behalf. The *kotwal's* pleading obliged Balban to cancel the order regarding the aged holders of land. The reform, therefore, did not prove to be effective. The policy of grant of land to the soldiers in lieu of cash payments continued as before. The custom of sending proxies—ill-equipped, hired men—by the troopers, however, came to an end.

Balban placed the army under the charge of Imad-ul-mulk, a very competent and vigilant officer, and appointed him army

minister (*diwan-i-ariz*). He was made independent of the finance minister's control. Imad-ul-mulk took special interest in matters relating to recruitment, salary and equipment of troops. He enforced military discipline and, by honest and wise policy, made the army a powerful instrument of force. There was, of course, no revolutionary change introduced in military organisation, but Balban's vigilance and strictness and the army minister's attention to details raised the efficiency and tone of the fighting machine upon which the strength of the Sultanate depended.

Suppression of rebellions

Students of medieval Indian history have missed a patent fact, namely, that during the entire period of the so-called Slave rule no addition of territory was made by any of the Turkish rulers from Qutub-ud-din Aibak down to the death of Kaiqubad in 1290. Their time and energy were quite exhausted in reconquering what Muhammad of Ghur had conquered but had been lost to his successors. When Balban became king he was faced with the old question, namely, whether he should make fresh conquests of territory from Hindu rulers and annex it to Delhi. Some of his close friends advised him to follow the above course; but the Sultan, who was a realist, felt that it would mean taking an undue risk and exposing Delhi to the Mongols and subjecting the state to internal disorder. He, therefore, decided not to make fresh conquests but to regain the old and to consolidate what the Sultanate already possessed.

Even this task was stupendous. Our people had practically thrown off the Turkish yoke in most parts of Hindustan. They had expelled the Turkish governors and soldiers and were following the policy of ravaging the Turkish territory and preventing cultivation of land and collection of revenue by the Turkish officers. In the Doab and in Awadh there was perpetual rebellion. The Sultan's men could not collect any revenue in Katehar (modern Rohilkhand). The Rajputs made the roads unsafe by their depredations. Rebellious Rajput chiefs had their strongholds in Badaun, Amroha, Patiali and Kampil from where they issued out, committed excesses, prevented the cultivators from cultivating the land, plundered the way-farers and then returned to their hiding places. The area round the capital city of Delhi was infested by robbers who plundered the people of Delhi practically every day and the city gates had to be closed

after the afternoon prayers. The condition in the distant provinces, such as, Bangal, Bihar and Rajasthan, was much worse. Our patriotic leaders in that age cleverly followed the policy of plunder and devastation, so as not to give sufficient time to the Turks to consolidate their hold in the country. There was, however, lack of first-rate leadership which prevented them from uniting together and mustering adequate forces to fight and expel the Turks from the country.

Balban was not deterred by the enormity of the task from carrying out his resolution of putting down rebellions. In the very first year of his accession, he succeeded in making the vicinity of Delhi safe from robbers and rebels. He punished them with a heavy hand and cleared the jungles and built four forts in the rural area around Delhi and garrisoned them with ferocious Afghan troops. Next year, he undertook operations in the Doab and in Awadh. He divided the area into a number of military commands and appointed energetic officers to clear the forests and to conduct a ruthless drive against the local Hindu chieftains and their robber, though liberty-loving, bands. He established military posts at Bhojapur, Patiali, Kampil and Jalali, all of which were garrisoned with semi-barbarous Afghan troops. Thereafter, Balban proceeded to Katehar. There he ordered his men to attack the villages, to set fire to the houses and to slay the entire adult male population. Innocent women and children were dragged into slavery. By these barbarous methods he struck terror into the hearts of the people and depopulated the entire region. In every village and jungle heaps of human corpses were left rotting. The remnants of the people, lurking here and there, were thoroughly cowed down. We are told by the historian, Barani, that the Kateharias never after raised their heads and the entire region became safe for the traveller, the peasant and the government officer.

Expeditions were sent to reduce the rebellious territories in Rajputana and Bundelkhand, but the exertions of the Delhi army met with only partial success.

Recovery of Bangal

As usual, Bangal gave considerable trouble to Balban. In 1279, encouraged by the Mongol threat on the north-west and the old age of the Sultan, Tughril Khan, the governor, who had sent in his submission during the first year of his reign, raised the stand-

ard of rebellion. He assumed the title of Sultan, struck coins and caused the *khutba* be read in his name. Balban despatched Amin Khan, governor of Awadh, to reduce the rebel to obedience. Amin Khan was, however, defeated and Balban was so enraged that he ordered him to be hanged over the city gate of Awadh. He then sent another army under Tirmiti. He fared no better than his predecessor. A third army is said to have been similarly beaten and driven off. Balban's patience was now exhausted and he made preparations to march to Bangal in person. At the head of an army, two lakhs strong, and accompanied by his second son, Bughra Khan, he appeared in the vicinity of Lakhanauti, which was, however, abandoned by Tughril who had fled towards East Bangal. Balban pursued the rebel and reached Sonargaon near Dacca. Tughril was captured far away from Dacca by Bektars and put to death by him at Hajinagar in East Bangal. The Sultan then turned to Lakhanauti and there inflicted a terrible punishment upon Tughril's followers. "On either side of the principal bazaar," writes the historian Barani, "in a street more than two miles in length, a row of stakes was set up and the adherents of Tughril were impaled upon them. None of the beholders had ever seen a spectacle so terrible, and many swooned with terror and disgust." His revenge being thus satisfied, the Sultan appointed Bughra Khan governor of Bangal and advised him to remain faithful to Delhi. "Understand me," he said to his second son, "and forget not that if the governors of Hind or Sindh, of Malwa or Gujarat, of Lakhanauti or Sonargaon, shall draw the sword and become rebels to the throne of Delhi then such punishment, as has fallen on Tughril and his dependants, will fall upon them, their wives, their children and all their adherents." Satisfying himself that Bangal would not henceforth rise into a rebellion, Balban returned to Delhi. He then took steps to punish the deserters of the Delhi army who had joined Tughril but were now captives in the Sultan's hands in the same manner as he had punished his adherents at Lakhanauti. But, at the intercession of a qazi, he modified his plan. Of the offenders, those who were ordinary men were pardoned, those who enjoyed a slightly higher status were punished for a temporary period and those who held still higher positions were thrown into prison. But the officers among them were mounted on buffaloes and paraded through the streets of Delhi.

The Mongol invasion

Reference has been made to the threat of the Mongol invasion on the north-western frontier of the Sultanate which prevented Balban from following an aggressive policy of conquest. For some time past Mongols had been appearing on our north-western frontier and had brought Lahore under their sphere of influence. In that direction only Multan and Sindh remained in the hands of Delhi's agents, and even these two provinces were exposed to invasions from the north-west. Balban's policy was to strengthen the north-western frontier of the Delhi kingdom by building a line of forts along that frontier and garrisoning them with able-bodied Afghan troops. He placed the entire region under the charge of his warrior cousin, Sher Khan Sanqar, whose courage struck terror into the hearts of the Mongols and frightened turbulent tribes like the Khokhars. His death, in or about 1270, removed a competent warden of the marches. Balban now divided the entire frontier region into two parts. The province of Sunam and Samana was placed under the charge of his younger son, Bughra Khan, while Multan, Sindh and Lahore were given to his eldest son, prince Muhammad Khan. Prince Muhammad was an able soldier, a competent administrator and, above all, a man of great literary taste. In his service two of the greatest poets of India writing in Persian, named Amir Khusrav and Amir Hasan, began their literary career. He even extended an invitation to the greatest Persian poet of the time, Shaikh Sadi, but the latter politely declined the honour on the ground of old age. Prince Muhammad took effective measures to check the advance of the Mongols. But the latter ravaged the upper Panjab and succeeded in crossing the river Satlaj. The two princes, Muhammad and Bughra Khan, sent their contingents and their united troops defeated and drove away the invaders. But the Mongols re-appeared early in 1286, and this time prince Muhammad was killed in a contest with them in February the same year. The news of the death of his eldest son completely prostrated Balban, then aged above eighty; but the old Sultan continued his policy of taking interest in the defence of the north-western frontier. He reoccupied Lahore; but otherwise his success against the mongols was not great. The authority of Delhi did not extend beyond Lahore. The region west of the river Ravi continued to be under the control of the Mongols.

Death of Balban

Reference has been made to the death of prince Muhammad, the eldest son of the Sultan, in whom had centred all the future hopes of the dynasty. The prince had already been nominated for the succession. His death administered a fatal shock to the old Sultan. On receipt of the news, Balban continued discharging his kingly duties without apparent concern; but during the night in the seclusion of his private apartment, he wept bitterly. Indeed, he never recovered from the shock. Perceiving that his end was approaching fast, he summoned Bughra Khan, his second son, to stay with him during his illness; but Bughra Khan was an irresponsible man and was afraid of his father's stern nature. So he slipped away to Lakhanauti. Balban now nominated prince Muhammad's son, Kai Khusrav, as his heir. Within a few days of this nomination, he died about the middle of 1287.

An estimate of Balban

Balban held the reins of government for about forty years, first as deputy of Sultan Nasir-ud-din Mahmud and then as Sultan. Throughout this long period he had one single aim, namely, that of consolidating the infant Turkish state in Hindustan. There is no doubt that in this task he attained a great success. He restored internal peace and protected the Sultanate from the Mongols by making admirable arrangements for the defence of the north-western frontier. He eschewed aggressive conquest of the territory of the neighbouring Hindu chiefs, not because he was against violating the sanctity of independent states, but because he believed, and rightly too, that aggressive warfare for further addition of territory would impair the efficiency of the Sultanate and would unnecessarily strain the limited resources and manpower of the Turks in a foreign country. Balban raised the prestige of the crown which had fallen low in the days of his predecessors. He crushed the big feudal lords of the Turkish aristocracy and, thereby, gave a new colour to the Turkish state in the country. He was, without doubt, an able and stern administrator and a successful ruler.

He achieved his object by ruthlessness and by striking terror all round. His punishments were unnecessarily harsh and cruel and even barbarous; but it must be admitted that they were well calculated to achieve the objective Balban had at heart. Balban was

a rigid Sunni Musalman. He punctiliously discharged all the religious duties enjoined by Islam. He was fond of the company of pious Muslim divines. It is said that he always dined in their company and conversed with them on Muslim law and religion. He was fanatically inclined and was intolerant of the religion of the vast majority of his subjects. Devoid of human sympathy, he had no regard for age, rank or sex.

Balban was a great patron of learning. He gave refuge to many learned men and princes from Central Asia. These had fled from their homeland to save themselves from the clutches of the Mongols. They were granted liberal maintenance allowances and allotted separate quarters in the capital. Balban's court was a centre of Islamic culture and learning. He loved architecture. Like all his predecessors, he was not a constructive genius. He possessed an orderly, but not an inventive intellect. He did not bring into existence new civil or military institutions; but he made the old ones work more smoothly and efficiently by his constant vigilance and attention. Balban's theory of kingship was akin to that of divine right of kings, and the key-note of his policy was unalloyed despotism. He was a believer in the theory of the racial superiority of the Turks. He did not like to associate non-Turks with his administration and was altogether against the employment of Indian Muslims in State service. He administered a sharp rebuke to an officer for having employed a native Musalman as a clerk in the district office at Amroha. He had faith in the superiority of 'blue blood'. He looked down upon common people and did not condescend to talk to those whom he considered to be men of low birth. By temperament, training and conviction he was incapable of understanding the people's point of view and winning their goodwill.

Balban's most notable achievement was ensuring the safety of the Turkish state and giving it a new lease of life. His next great success lay in raising the prestige of the crown. His third achievement was giving absolute peace and order. These were no ordinary achievements considering the difficulties and dangers that beset the Turkish state in that critical age. His place among the so-called Slave kings is next only to that of Iltutmish.

KAIQUBAD, 1287-1290

After Balban's death his nobles, led by Fakhr-ud-din, the

kotwal of Delhi, set aside the aged monarch's nominee, Kai Khusrav, and placed Bughra Khan's son, Kaiqubad, on the throne. The new ruler assumed the title of Muiz-ud-din Kaiqubad.

At the time of his accession Kaiqubad was seventeen years old. He had been brought up under the strict guardianship of his puritanical grandfather, Balban. He was not allowed to cast 'a glance at a fair face' or to taste wine. Now that he found himself quite free and master of a big kingdom, his pent-up desires and passions found expression in unrestrained indulgence in wine, women and gaiety. His example was followed by his courtiers who had become sick of the restraint imposed upon their emotions by the late king. Such a young, inexperienced and pleasure-loving Sultan was bound to neglect administration which was left to shift for itself. Power passed into the hands of an unscrupulous intriguer, named Nizam-ud-din, who was the son-in-law of Fakhr-ud-din, the kotwal of Delhi. Kaiqubad became a puppet in his hands. The Mongols took advantage of the change and invaded the Panjab under their leader, Tamur Khan, and advanced as far as Samana. Fortunately, Malik Baqbaq defeated them near Lahore and brought a thousand of them prisoners to Delhi where they were put to death. Within the kingdom, law and order were disregarded by ambitious people. Nizam-ud-din sedulously tried to remove all competent rivals from his path of ambition with a view to seize the throne for himself.

Kaiqubad's father, Bughra Khan, who was governor of Bangal since the days of Balban, having been informed of the developments at Delhi, proceeded towards the imperial capital at the head of a powerful army. It is said that his intentions were to seize the throne from the feeble hands of his son. According to another authority his only desire was to administer a wholesome advice to Kaiqubad to give up the pursuit of pleasures and to attend to business. Be that as it may, he reached the Ghaghra near Ayodhya in 1288. Kaiqubad proceeded against him at the head of an equally big force. Nizam-ud-din did his best to prevent a meeting between the father and the son and to instigate Kaiqubad to fight; but some faithful servants of the time of Balban successfully exerted their influence to bring about a reconciliation between the two. It was decided that Bughra Khan would pay homage to the Sultan of Delhi who was the over-lord of the ruler of Bangal. Bughra Khan agreed and paid homage to Kaiqubad. At the end of the ceremony Kaiqubad broke down,

fell at his father's feet and conducted him to the throne. They remained together for some days and, at the time of parting, Bughra Khan advised his son to mend his ways and to get rid of such an evil counsellor as Nizam-ud-din. After this meeting they returned to their respective places. Kaiqubad heeded his father's advice for a short time only. He temporarily gave up indulgence and had Nizam-ud-din despatched by poison. Thereafter, he relapsed into his old lethargy and devotion to sensual pleasures. After Nizam-ud-din's death a Khalji noble, named Jalal-ud-din Firoz, was given the important fief of Bulandshahr and was appointed commander of the Sultan's army. This appointment brought about a rift at the court. The Turkish nobles, who looked down upon the Khaljis as non-Turks, were hostile to Jalal-ud-din. Soon after this Kaiqubad was struck down with paralysis. The Turkish nobles, therefore, raised to the throne his infant son under the title of Shams-ud-din Kayumars. They organised the Turks and wanted to put Jalal-ud-din Khalji to death, but Jalal-ud-din was on his guard. He forestalled their design and occupied Delhi. The victor caused Kaiqubad to be murdered and set himself up as regent of the new infant king. The regency was only a transitional arrangement and it could not work. Jalal-ud-din set aside Kayumars, put him to death and ascended the throne in March 1290. The so-called Slave dynasty thus came to an end.

12

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SO-CALLED SLAVE KINGS

Extent of the kingdom

It is not generally known that the extent of the Turkish kingdom established in Hindustan by Muhammad of Ghur remained constant throughout the rule of the succeeding monarchs, known as Slave kings. If there was any change, it was one of contraction and not of expansion. None of the so-called Slave rulers made any appreciable additions to the territory conquered by Muhammad of Ghur and his lieutenant, Qutub-ud-din, before he became king. The Hindu rulers within the boundaries of the Sultanate of Delhi made repeated attempts during our period to throw off the Turkish yoke. Even a casual perusal of the contemporary authority, the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* of Minhaj-ud-din Siraj, shows that year after year the Sultans had to undertake expeditions to put down refractory Hindu chiefs and recalcitrant Hindu peasantry. One and the same piece of land had to be conquered time and again by practically every Sultan. Under these circumstances the problem for the Slave kings was how to retain what had come to them from their predecessors and not to add to it by an aggressive warfare. The boundaries of the Sultanate of Delhi fluctuated from reign to reign. In general, it may, however, be said that the Sultanate was bounded by the Himalayan Tarai in the north and by a zigzag line on the south that included northern half of Bangal, north Bihar, part of Bundelkhand, Gwalior, Ranthambhor, Ajmer and Nagaur and passing north of Jaisalmer separated Gujarat from Sindh. In the east, half of Bangal up to a line falling much short of Dacca may be said to have been part of the dominion of the Sultanate. On the north-west the river Jhelam was usually the boundary which sometimes shrunk to the river Beas. Lahore was, generally speaking, included in the Delhi kingdom, and so also Multan and Sindh. The region of the Salt Range, the state of Jammu and Kashmir and the north-western and north-eastern corners of the modern Panjab were outside the limits of the Sultanate. But even within these limits there were many independent Hindu

chieftains, particularly in the Himalyan Tarai, the northern portion of the Doab and in northern Rajasthan and Bundelkhand, which were never really completely subjugated. Hence, the so-called Slave kings did not enjoy absolute sovereignty within the limits of their kingdom.

The nature of the State

The Turkish State in India, like all Islamic States, was a theocracy. It was based on the Islamic law as given in the *Quran* and expounded by jurists. The *Quranic* law was religious or Canon law and was known as *shariat* or the Law. All civil laws were merged in the *shariat*. The State had a religion of its own which was Islam. and, in strict theory, all the resources of the State were available for religious propaganda. In actual practice, however, this theory underwent many modifications. It was inevitable in a country like India, where a vast majority of the population was non-Muslim and where political conditions differed greatly from those contemplated by the Muslim jurists.

According to strict Islamic theory, the real king of a Muslim state is God. The earthly ruler is only His agent, bound to enforce His will as revealed in the *Quran*. The sovereignty was based on election by the *millat*, that is, the entire body of male Muslims in the country; but this theory, which could not work successfully even in Arabia, was reduced to a farce in Hindustan. The early Turks, who came to our country, had no fixed law of succession and no recognised procedure that they might follow in the case of a disputed succession. The choice of the Sultan during the thirteenth century was, generally speaking, limited to the surviving members of the deceased ruler's family. Thus, birth, ability and nomination by the dead king and the support given by the nobles—these factors very often decided the election. It was, however, the decisive voice of the powerful nobles that determined the selection of a ruler. It is worthy of note that the topmost nobles usually preferred personal convenience to the interest of the State.

The Sultanate of Delhi was a military State and was based on force, not on the consent of the people. The entire territory in its possession was held by powerful Turkish troops. There were established garrisons at the strategic places in the interior of the country. A line of forts was built and garrisoned with troops along its frontiers to serve as military outposts. The government being foreign, it concerned itself with two duties only, that is, the collection

of revenue and the maintenance of law and order. It had little to do with the welfare of the public.

The only citizens of the early Turkish state in India were Muslims, notably Turkish Musalmans. The Hindus, who formed a vast majority of the population of the Sultanate of Delhi, were not accorded full rights of citizenship. The non-Muslims were called *zimmis*, that is, people living under guarantee or contract. When the Turks conquered our country, they offered, like other Muslim conquerors, three alternatives to the conquered people, namely, conversion to Islam, or death, or living like a subject and degraded people on payment of the *jizya*. A vast majority of the conquered people agreed to pay the *jizya*, and they were allowed to live. Several disabilities were imposed upon the *zimmis* who were discriminated against in matters of state employment, civic rights, justice and taxation. Learned Muslim divines (*ulema*), who were supposed to be the custodians of Islamic law, were particularly hostile to the subject people. Their policy aimed at reducing the Hindus to the position of hewers of wood and drawers of water. Sometimes a monarch who was particularly servile to the *ulema* pursued a policy of religious persecution of his subjects and attempted systematically to put down idolatry. But in normal times this was an exception rather than the rule. There does not seem to have been any systematic attempt on governmental level at the extermintation of the Hindus. Yet the vast majority of our people were not happy under the early Turkish rule which was foreign. Modern Muslim writers, such as Dr. I. H. Qureshi and Dr. Mahdi Husain, have laboured to prove that there were no disabilities imposed on the non-Muslim population and that the Hindus were happier under the Turkish Sultans than they had been under their own kings. But their arguments, to say the least, are unconvincing and require no comment. It will also be historically wrong to say that the early Turkish Sultans made no attempt to establish religious uniformity in their nascent State by trying to convert the people of the country to their faith.

Relations with the Caliphate

It was originally believed that there was only one Muslim State in the world, namely, the Caliphate, and that its religious and temporal head was the Caliph. But the Caliphate had fallen to pieces by the thirteenth century and several independent Muslim States or nations had come into existence. Yet, by a convenient

political fiction, these new and independent Muslim States recognised the Khalifa, at least in theory, to be their political and religious head or suzerain. They had the Khalifa's name on their coins and in the *khutbas*. This fiction continued even after the Buddhist Hulagu, the great Mongol leader, had taken Baghdad and put the Khalifa to death in 1258. An uncle of the last Khalifa took refuge in Egypt, where he was recognised as the spiritual head by the Sultans of that country. The fiction, thus, continued till the last of the nominal Khalifas resigned his theoretical rights in favour of Sultan Sulaiman II of Constantinople in the sixteenth century.

Mahmud of Ghazni was given the title of Sultan by the Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad. Muhammad of Ghur, too, inscribed the name of the Caliph on his coins. It was in the interest of the early Turkish Sultans of Hindustan to pose as the nominees of the Khalifa. They did not like to disregard the tradition of the supposed unity of the Islamic State. Iltutmish was the first Turkish Sultan of Delhi to receive a formal investitute as Sultan from the Khalifa. He introduced the name of the Khalifa of Baghdad on his coins. None of his successors throughout the period of the so-called Slave dynasty was so invested by the theoretical sovereign of the so-called Islamic State. Yet all the rulers of the dynasty continued, in theory, to profess themselves to be the deputies of the Khalifa. It had become a fashion to do so.

THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The Monarch

In actual practice the Sultan of Delhi was a full-fledged sovereign ruler, uncontrolled by any outside agency or authority. The Sultan was a thorough-going despot. He was the supreme executive-head of the kingdom. He was also the fountain-head of justice and the supreme interpreter of the law. Thus he was the temporal head and ruler of all the people in his dominions and the religious head of the Muslim section of the population. His powers were many and unlimited. In actual practice, however, these were circumscribed. He had to listen to the advice of the learned divines or ulema. There was always the fear of a rebellion by the people. The traditional unwritten law of the land had also to be respected; but, as in the final analysis the power of the Sultan depended upon the degree of his military strength, he could, if he was a powerful

man, disregard all the above considerations and rule according to his will. Such rulers were, however, very few. Throughout our period there was only one such personality named Balban. All others, including Iltutmish, had to consult the nobles and to abide by their wishes.

Ministers

The Sultanate of Delhi showed little planning. The central government was a haphazard growth. There were, however, four important ministers at the capital, namely, the *wazir*, the *ariz-i-mamalik*, *diwan-i-insha* and *diwan-i-rasalat*. The *wazir* may be designated as the chief minister. Besides having the charge of revenue and finance departments, he exercised a general supervisory authority over other ministers. The *wazir* was a civilian, but sometimes he had to command an army. He controlled the military pay office. He was assisted by a *naib* and had a large establishment consisting of a number of secretaries and dozens of clerks and accountants. There was a chief accountant or the *mushrif-i-mamalik* and an auditor-general or the *mustawfi-i-mamalik* under him. The second minister was the army minister or the *diwan-i-ariz*. He was in charge of recruitment of troops, their muster-roll, their equipment and efficiency. Besides, he was the paymaster-general of the army. It was his duty to hold reviews of the troops and to see that they were properly equipped and that they discharged their duties efficiently. The third minister was *diwani-i-insha* whose duty it was to draft royal proclamations and despatches. He had a large staff of secretaries and clerks under him. He used to accompany the king and to compile a record of all his activities. The fourth minister was the *diwan-i-rasalat*. He seems to have been in charge of foreign and diplomatic correspondence. His work was to keep in touch with ambassadors and envoys sent to, and received from, foreign courts.

Besides these, there were two other important dignitaries whose importance cannot be exaggerated. Their rank was next to that of the ministers. They were *barid-i-mamalik*, that is, the chief news-writer of the kingdom under whom there were a host of news-writers and spies, and the *qazi-mamalik* or the chief justice of kingdom. This officer was the head of the judiciary and also the incharge of the ecclesiastical department. In the latter capacity he was known as *sadar-i-jahan* or *sadar-us-sudur*.

There were several other high officials at the capital, connected particularly with the royal household, but their rank was lower than

that of the ministers. The most important among these was the *vakil-i-dar* who was something like the comptroller of the royal household. As such, he had to be very near the royal person and wielded considerable influence. The next was *amir-i-hajib*, that is, the master of ceremonies. He enforced the court etiquette and acted as an intermediary between the Sultan and the lower officers and the people. The Sultan granted an honour of interview to the people through this officer. The next officer was *sar-i-jandar*, that is, the commander of the royal bodyguard. Another important dignitary was *amir-i-akhur* or the master of the horse and still another *shahna-i-pilan* or the superintendent of the elephants.

During the reign of some of the Sultans a new office of the *naib-i-mamalikat* was instituted. He was the royal deputy and, as such, enjoyed higher powers than the wazir or the prime minister. But, in normal times, there was no naib and, if there was one, as in the time of Balban, he enjoyed no powers except those that were delegated to him by the Sultan.

The ministers of the central government were appointed by the king and were his servants. They were responsible to him only. They were not supreme in their respective departments, unless the king was a minor or was a puppet in the hands of his nobles. They could not influence a powerful ruler like Balban, and were there to carry out his wishes even in matters of detail.

THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

The government of the so-called Slave rulers was not a homogeneous entity but a decentralised system. The structure was loose and made up of military commands. The areas under the military commands were not uniform in size or population or even in income. They had come into existence at various times and were a haphazard growth. These commands carried with them territorial jurisdiction and were called *iqtas*. The term has been translated as *fief* by European writers. The *iqtas* may conveniently be designated as provinces, though the designation is not strictly correct. The holders of *iqtas* were known as *muqtis*. The *muqtis* were, for all practical purposes, governors of their respective jurisdictions and enjoyed great powers. There was no uniformity either of size or of administration in the *iqtas*. The degree of power, political or military, enjoyed by the *muqtis* differed from *iqta* to *iqta*. The

muqti was free to carry on his own administration, subject, of course, to the traditional local usages, to employ his own officers, to collect revenues, to defray expenditure of his administration and to pay the surplus to the central government. In theory, he was subject to the central audit; but in practice he was almost independent. His main duties were the maintenance of law and order in his jurisdiction or province and to carry out the king's commands. He was required to furnish a contingent of troops to the Sultan whenever he was called upon to do so. The *muqti* enjoyed a high salary which was charged on the revenue of his province. He had an army of his own and a big official establishment. The important *iqtas* during our period were Mandawar, Amroha, Sambhal, Badaun, Baran (Bulandshahr), Koil (Aligarh), Awadh, Kara Manikpur, Bayana, Gwalior, Nagaur, Hansi, Multan, Uch, Lahore, Samana, Sunam, Kuhram, Bhatinda and Sarhind.

The *muqtis* or governors were also required to collect revenue from the Sultan's vassals whose principalities were situated within their provinces. These chiefs were Hindu rulers who had been reduced to vassalage by the Sultans. They were required to pay *kharaj* or land revenue and also *jizya*. They, of course, acknowledged the suzerainty of the Sultan of Delhi, but were otherwise independent in their own principalities.

The *Khalisah* districts

Besides the *iqtas* there were large areas comprising a set of districts which were governed directly by the central government and not by a *muqti*. These areas were known as *khalisah*. European writers called them crown lands, but they may, more correctly, be termed as 'reserve areas', that is, areas which were not given in assignments and the revenue of which was collected directly by the central revenue ministry. The cultivators in these areas paid their revenues directly to the government; of course, through the headmen of their villages.

There were, perhaps, no sub-divisions like districts and parganas during the so-called Slave period. These divisions, probably, were recognised by the Delhi Sultanate in the fourteenth century.

The army

The army was, of course, the most important branch of administration, as the power of the Sultan depended upon its strength

and efficiency. But, curiously enough, there was no powerful permanent force at the capital which might be called a standing army. The Sultan had, no doubt, his bodyguards under the command of an officer called *sar-i-jandar*, but he depended mostly on the contingents of troops furnished by provincial governors or *muqtis*. The reason seems to be that when the Turks came to India all of them were members of the fighting forces. After, however, they had conquered a large territory and settled down to administer it, they found it necessary to divide the society on the basis of profession. A new class of professional soldiers, thus, came into existence. In the beginning, as all the followers of the invader were fighters, it was not considered necessary to have a standing army. This practice continued even after the invader was transformed into the ruler.

The royal bodyguards increased in number with the expansion of the Sultanate so that with the passage of time they formed the nucleus of a large army. This army, though not permanent, was placed under the management of *ariz-i-mamalik* or the army minister who was responsible for its recruitment, efficiency and payment. The important branches of the army were cavalry and infantry. Most of the prominent soldiers and officers were slaves, such as, the *Muizzi* slaves (slaves of Muiz-ud-din Muhammad of Ghur), *Qutubi* slaves (those of Qutub-ud-din Aibak), and *Shamsi* slaves (those of Shams-ud-din Iltutmish). They were mostly cavalrymen and were considered to be valued troops. There was, of course, no scientific military training, no drill or regimental discipline in those days. The efficiency of the army, therefore, depended mostly upon the ability and attention of the *diwan-i-ariz* and the Sultan.

Besides the central army, the provincial governors maintained their own contingents on the same footing as the king. The provincial army was the governor's own force. He was free in the matter of recruitment, discipline and payment; but, as he was required to send a specified quota for service at the capital, his army must have been controlled to a certain extent by the *ariz-i-mamalik*.

There were two other kinds of troops who may be called special recruits. The special recruits were of two kinds. Firstly, those troops who were enlisted on special occasions to fight a holy war (*jihad*)—naturally against the native princes. Such troops were exclusively Muslim. They were entitled to a share in the plunder according to the *shariat*. Their share was 4/5 of the plunder, 1/5

going to the Sultan. Secondly, there were the volunteers who joined the army of their own accord and brought their own arms and horses.

The Sultan was the supreme commander of the army. In the provinces, the *muqtis* were the commanders of their troops. The *diwan-i-ariz* or *ariz-i-mamalik* was not required to act as the supreme commander, though he sometimes selected troops for a campaign. Only once during our period an army commander was appointed and that was in the time of Raziah. This was a temporary arrangement and after her death the office was abolished. The soldiers were paid mostly by assignments of land and, sometimes, in cash also. It is not clear whether the commander of an army drew his own salary and that of his soldiers or the soldiers were paid individually. Probably, the former was the practice.

The army organisation was crude. If the force of the Delhi Sultan was more efficient than that of the indigenous princes, it was not due to its superior organisation or training, but to its unexampled religious solidarity, sense of a common brotherhood and, above all, its unity, being stranger in a new and foreign country.

Financial administration

The income of the Sultanate of Delhi was derived from the five main sources sanctioned by the *shariat*. They were : (1) *Kharaj*, (2) *Ushr*, (3) *Jizya*, or poll tax, (4) *Khams*, and (5) *Zakat*. Besides, there were a few other taxes, such as, income from mines and treasure-trove, heirless property and customs and excise duties. *Kharaj* was a land tax realised from Hindu chiefs and peasantry. The ratio of the state demand to the gross produce of the soil was not constant. In fact, it seems that the *kharaj* was calculated on guess work or on the basis of old revenue records of the Hindu times. The *ushr*, too, was a land tax. It was charged on land held by a Muslim and watered by natural means. Usually it was one-tenth of the produce, and that is why it is called *ushr*. Some modification in the land tax from Muslim cultivators had to be made, for when a large number of non-muslims were converted to Islam it was found unprofitable to retain the old rate, that is, one-tenth of the produce. The *jizya* was a tax on *zimmis* or non-Muslims. For purposes of this tax the entire Hindu population was divided into three grades or classes. The first grade paid at the rate of forty-eight *dirhams*, the second at twenty-four and the third at twelve *dirhams* for each soul living. Women, children, hermits and beggars were exempt from

this tax. *Khams* was one-fifth of the booty captured in war from the infidels. Four-fifth went to the army. The *zakat* was a tax on Muslims. It was one-fortieth of their income and it had to be spent on specified items for the benefit of Muslims only, such as repair of mosques, defraying the cost of religious endowments and the pension to the *ulema* and on other religious and charitable purposes. The customs duty was on goods that came from outside. Its rate was 2½ per cent in case of Muslims and 5 per cent in that of non-Muslim merchants. There were a number of transit duties and tolls charged on ferries, roads, bridges, etc. According to the *shariat*, the ruler was entitled to all the underground treasures and mines.

These sources brought in a huge annual income to the Sultan. The most profitable source of income seems to have been the Sultan's share of the booty which brought in lakhs of rupees worth of spoils from Hindu territories. We have no means of ascertaining even the probable income of the Sultanate during this period. It must, however, have been a very considerable sum indeed, for we hear of accumulation of huge wealth from reign to reign.

There was no privy purse for the Sultan those days. The entire income of the State belonged to him in practice, though not in theory and he could use it for the benefit of the State or spend it on his household and personal requirements.

Administration of justice

The Sultan was the fountain-head of justice. He had not only to provide for an equitable administration of justice but was also required to hear and decide cases himself. Thus the Sultan was the highest court of appeal in the country. But sometimes he decided cases in the first instance also. In cases arising out of religious disputes he was assisted by the chief *sadr* and the *mufti*, while in other cases he sat with the chief *qazi*. The next highest judicial authority in the Sultanate was the chief qazi who was appointed by the Sultan. The historian, Minhaj-ud-din Siraj, held this office for a long time. He lived at the capital and decided cases. The chief qazi was also the *sadr* of the kingdom and was called *sadr-i-jahan* in that capacity. In his capacity as the chief qazi he supervised and controlled the lower judges in the provinces and heard appeals coming from their courts.

There were qazis in the provinces and also in important cities. They were appointed by the chief qazi. There was another officer

known as *dad-i-bak* or *amir-i-dad*. His office corresponded to that of the modern city magistrate. The cases in which Hindus alone were involved were generally decided by their *panchayats*, but those cases in which Muslims and Hindus were parties were decided by the qazis. The *kotwal* was the head of the police department in the towns. Besides being the police officer, he was also a committing magistrate. Criminal law was very severe. Torture and mutilation were common punishments. The so-called Slave kings followed the policy of minimum interference with the lives of the people of rural areas. The State made no arrangements for administering justice in the villages where the people had their own courts or *panchayats*.

Society and culture

The ruling class was composed of Turks belonging to various tribes. There were other foreigners besides them, such as, the Persians, the Afghans and the Arabs. The Turks suffered from superiority complex. They believed in the theory of racial purity and racial superiority and did not associate the Indian Muslims, whose number was growing, with the administration of their kingdom. But, inspite of this complex, there was a considerable mixing of the different races with the result that the Muslim population in Hindustan in the thirteenth century was becoming hybrid. Inter-marriages with the native Muslims and refugees from Central Asia and also Mongols, newly converted to Islam, became common and brought about a fusion of the various races of Muslims in the land.

Broadly speaking, the Muslim society of the thirteenth century was divided into two classes, namely, the men of the sword and the men of the pen. The Turks belonged to the former category, while the theologians and literary men, who were mostly non-Turks, formed the latter group. They provided to the state the class of teachers and preachers. The Muslim aristocracy was predominantly of Turkish blood. It was a hierarchy with a series of ascending ranks at the top of which were *amirs*, *maliks* and *khans*. The highest title was *Ulugh Khan* and there was only one *Ulugh Khan* at a time. Slaves were gradually promoted and could become amirs and maliks. None of them, except Balban, was promoted to the rank of Khan. The Muslim society was mainly urban. It must have included, besides soldiers and administrators, traders, artisans, shopkeepers, clerks and beggars. An influential class was that of the slaves, most of whom had been born of non-Muslim parents, but had been sold as slaves,

converted to Islam and brought up in the houses of their Muslim masters. The Muslim population was predominantly Sunni. Shias mostly belonged to Multan and Sindh. Quite a large number of the latter class lived in Delhi and other cities in the Turkish dominion. There was no sympathy between the followers of the two sects. In fact, the Shias were hated by the Sunnis who were in power. The Shias made more than one attempt during our period to capture power, but were ruthlessly punished. There was a third religious group the members of which were known as *Sufis*. They were Muslim mystics who were men of learning and believed in direct communion with God. They practised piety and poverty and lived far away from the society of the townsmen. The *sufi* saints had many followers whom they initiated into *sufi* practices. They had two important orders among them, namely, the Chishtia order and the Suhrawardia order, founded, respectively, by Muin-ud-din Chishti at Ajmer and Bha-ud-din Zakariya at Multan. These two saints had many disciples who were instrumental in gaining a large number of willing converts to Islam.

The vast majority of the population was, of course, Hindu. As has been said before, a Hindu was called *zimmi* or a protected person and was required to pay a special tax called *jizya*. He suffered from many disabilities and was not accorded rights of full citizenship. His existence and that of his religion were tolerated as evils.[1] A considerable number of the Hindus were masters of the land and were fairly well-to-do. There is evidence to believe that some of the Hindu merchants and bankers advanced loans to the Muslim nobles. They did not, however, exercise any influence on the politics of the day except indirectly, as they could not be easily repressed and weeded out. Much of the business, industry and commerce were in their hands. Most of them were cultivators. Most of the Hindus lived in villages and hardly came into touch with the ruling minority.

During this period the contact between Hinduism and Islam had begun to exert some influence on the followers of the two creeds. The Hindu convert to Islam naturally retained some of his Hindu habits and mode of life. He readily took to the practice of worshipping saints and shrines, as he was accustomed, while Hindu, to the worship of local and tribal deities. *Sufism* provided a common ground

1 For the status of non-Muslims in an Islamic state, see Sir Jadunath Sarkar's *History of Aurangzib*, Vol. III, pp. 251-57 and 263-64.

to the followers of the two creeds. Among the intellectuals of the two creeds, however, there was not much of cultural or religious contact.

Some of the Turkish rulers were patrons of learning and gathered around themselves theologians, historians, and men of letters in general. Balban particularly had many a literary light at his court. The greatest among the literary lights of the period were Amir Khusrav and Amir Hasan of Delhi both of whom wrote in Persian and whose works were read even outside India. We are told that many valuable works of history, theology and fiction were produced in the thirteenth century. There was some arrangement also for the education of children. In every Muslim colony there were two educational institutions. They were the *maktab*, that is, the primary school attached to the mosque and the *madrsah* or a seat of higher learning. Some of the Sultans founded colleges at Delhi and other places and richly endowed them. Iltutmish is said to have built a college at Delhi and another at Multan. Generally two arts were practised. They were architecture and calligraphy. The Turks were fond of fine buildings and they imported Muslim architectural ideas and designs from Central Asia. We have already seen that Qutub-ud-din Aibak, Iltutmish and Balban built several notable edifices, particularly mosques. Though taboo for the orthodox, music could not have altogether been neglected. Some of the modern Muslim writers describe the Sultanate of Delhi as a culture state. This, however, is a tall claim. If some of the rulers were fond of literature, they were also ferocious tyrants for the vast majority of their subjects; and if there was any real culture, it was confined to the court and the capital. The cultural activity was that of the classes and not of the masses. The Sultanate of Delhi was, in fact, a military state. It held the country by means of powerful military garrisons established at various strategic places. It concerned itself with two duties only, namely, the maintenance of law and order and the collection of revenue. It did not care for the cultural, moral, physical and even material welfare of the people. Such a state could not deserve the designation of a culture state. Inspite of its duration of about eighty-five years, it was definitely a foreign State on the Indian soil.

13

KHALJI IMPERIALISM

JALAL-UD-DIN FIROZ KHALJI, 1290-1296

Early career

Malik Firoz was a Turk of the Khalji tribe. His ancestors, after having migrated from Turkistan, had lived for over 200 years in the Helmand valley and Lamghan, parts of Afghanistan called *Garmasir* or the hot region, and had adopted some Afghan manners and customs. They were, therefore, wrongly looked upon as Afghans by the Turkish nobles in India. Firoz's family had migrated to our country and taken up service under the Turkish Sultans of Delhi. Firoz had risen to the important position of *sar-i-jandar*, that is, the head of the royal bodyguard, and was, subsequently, appointed governor of Samana. He was a very able soldier and, as a governor of the frontier province of Samana, had fought a number of engagements against the Mongol invaders and repelled them. He had thus acquired reputation as a successful soldier and administrator. He was, consequently, given the title of Shaista Khan. On the death of Malik Tuzaki he was promoted to the high office of army minister by Kaiqubad. Besides being a minister at the court of Delhi, Firoz was also the head of the large Khalji clan whose members were scattered all over Hindustan. A section of this tribe had ruled Bangal since the time of Ikhtiyar-ud-din bin Bakhtiyar Khalji. At the time of his promotion to ministership, he was probably the most experienced and powerful Turkish nobleman in Delhi.

His accession

It has already been related that there was little sympathy between the new army minister, Malik Firoz, and the orthodox Turkish party at the court headed by Malik Aitemar (Kachhan) and Malik Surkha, who held the important posts of *amir-i-hajib* and *barbak* and, as such, wielded supreme power at Delhi. These two Turkish nobles planned to get rid of Firoz and all other non-Turkish officers in order to re-assert the Turkish monopoly of power. This led to a

conflict between the parties, from which Firoz emerged victorious. Kachhan was put to death, his partisans were terrorised and Malik Firoz set himself up as a regent of the infant king, Kayumars. The next step was to put both Kaiqubad and Kayumars to death and seize power. This accomplished, Firoz ascended the throne at Kilokhari, the palace built by Kaiqubad, in March 1290, and assumed the title of Sultan Jalal-ud-din Firoz.

His unpopularity

The new king was an old man of seventy years. Inspite of having enjoyed the reputation of a seasoned and successful general who had guarded the north-western frontier of the kingdom throughout Kaiqubad's reign, Jalal-ud-din was very unpopular among the nobles and the people of Delhi. The main cause of his unpopularity with the proud Turks was the erroneous belief that the Khaljis were non-Turks and hence not entitled to share power with the Turks. For about eighty-four years the *Ilbari* Turks had occupied the throne of Delhi and, in their eyes, and also in those of the people, it was improper that the crown should have gone to one who did not belong to this race. Thirdly, Jalal-ud-din Firoz was an old man and had, therefore, some peculiarities due to age. He was, moreover, known to be very mild and generous and did not possess that dignity and grace which were supposed to be indispensable in a monarch. Fourthly, if not Firoz himself, at least his followers, particularly the young Khaljis, were known to be highly ambitious. They were, therefore, looked at with suspicion. For these reasons the new reign was unpopular, and Firoz dared not crown himself in Balban's palace at Delhi. He chose the unfinished palace of Kaiqubad at Kilokhari for the coronation ceremony. He lived there for about a year and instructed his courtiers and followers to build for themselves houses around the palace. He completed Kaiqubad's unfinished palace. Within a short time Kilokhari became an important town in the vicinity of Delhi. Firoz was not only unpopular with the old nobility but some of his own followers, specially the more vigorous and restless among them, did not like his generosity and weakness. The old Sultan followed the policy of minimum interference with the administrative arrangements and allowed older officers to remain in possession of their posts and emoluments. Young Khalji warriors who were looking forward to be appointed to top-ranking positions carrying power, prestige and remuneration, felt disgusted. Some of them

charged him with senility and dotage, pronounced him unfit for the throne and wanted to remove him and elevate one of their own number to the throne. His own nephew and son-in-law, Ala-ud-din, became the leader of this disgruntled party.

Domestic policy

Firoz's policy was not to bring about any radical change in the administrative personnel of his government. He confirmed the Turkish nobles in the offices that they had held during the last reign. Malik Chhajju, the nephew of Balban and the sole survivor of the latter's family, was allowed to retain the governorship of Kara Manikpur. Malik Fakhr-ud-din was confirmed as the kotwal of Delhi. He elevated his own sons to high rank. The eldest, Mahmud, was given the title of Khan-i-Khan. The second became Arkali Khan and the third was entitled Qadr Khan. The Sultan's younger brother was ennobled as Yaghrus Khan and was appointed army minister, that is, *ariz-i-mamalik*. Both his nephews, Ala-ud-din and Almas Beg, were similarly rewarded, and Malik Ahmad Chap, a near relative, was appointed *amir-i-hajib*, that is, master of ceremonies.

Firoz's internal policy was one of conciliation. He tried to be peaceful, merciful and humane and wanted to rule, if possible, without bloodshed. He was anxious not to come into clash with the old nobility or with the citizens of Delhi. That was why he did not take up his residence in the old city for about a year. When, however, he accepted the invitation of the citizens of the capital, headed by kotwal Fakhr-ud-din, he dismounted in front of Balban's Red Palace and wept before entering the throne-room. He did not take his seat on the throne as he had stood many a time, he said, before it when he was a mere noble and courtier.

Malik Chhajju raised the standard of revolt at Kara Manikpur in the second year of Firoz's reign. He assumed the title of Sultan and was joined by Hatim Khan, governor of Awadh. Their united armies proceeded against Delhi. Firoz marched out to meet them. An advance guard of his army under his son, Arkali Khan, encountered the rebels near Badaun and defeated them. Malik Chhajju was taken prisoner and was brought before the Sultan who wept at the high-born prisoner in fetters. He ordered Malik Chhajju and his followers to be released and then entertained them at a wine party. He openly praised Chhajju's followers for their loyalty to the only heir of their deceased master, Balban. The young Khalji

officers, headed by the outspoken Ahmad Chap, protested against this kind of silly talk which, he rightly said, was an incitement to rebellion. Firoz replied that he did not like to kill a single Muslim for the sake of a transitory kingdom. Malik Chhajju was delivered to the custody of Arkali Khan who was appointed to the government of Multan. Kara Manikpur was now given to Ala-ud-din, the Sultan's nephew.

Firoz sometimes carried his policy of leniency to excess. A number of *thags* or robbers were arrested at Delhi. One of these furnished information which led to the arrest of a thousand people belonging to this fraternity. Firoz, however, did not inflict any punishment on this gang. He embarked them in boats and sent them by water to Bangal where they were set free at his orders. There is, however, one instance on record of Firoz's departure from his policy of leniency. A religious leader, named Sidi Maula, who was a disciple of Shaikh Farid-ud-din Ganj-i-Shakar of Pak-Pattan (Ajudhan), was believed to have been an aspirant for the throne. He had a large number of followers whom he used to entertain in a most lavish manner. There was a plot to marry a daughter of the late Sultan Nasir-ud-din Mahmud to Sidi Maula and then to raise him to the throne. Some of the nobles of Firoz's court became privy to the conspiracy. The Sultan had, therefore, Sidi Maula and his chief disciples arrested and brought before him. He lost temper in a controversy with the Maula and had him murdered in his presence. A fanatic Muslim, who was opposed to this sect, slashed Sidi Maula several times with a razor and stabbed him with a packing needle. His body was trampled under foot by an elephant. The death of the saint was followed by a dust-storm and a severe famine caused by the failure of seasonal rains. It was superstitiously believed by the people that these were due to the curse of the deceased saint on the Sultan. The famine, in fact, was so severe that the price of grain rose to one *jital* per seer and a large number of people drowned themselves in the Yamuna.

Foreign policy

Firoz Khalji did not indulge in aggressive warfare. He conducted only two expeditions, none of which proved to be very successful. The first expedition was directed against Ranthambhor, led by the Sultan in person in 1290. The Chauhan ruler of the

fortress of Ranthambhor offered a stout resistance. Firoz, finding himself unequal to the task, gave up the campaign and returned to Delhi. He comforted himself with the argument that he valued each hair of a Muslim's head more than a hundred such fortresses as Ranthambhor. The only advantage that the king gained in the campaign was the occupation of the district of Jhain, where he destroyed the temples and broke the images to pieces. The next expedition was undertaken against Mandawar which had once belonged to Delhi, but had been recovered by the Rajputs. It was recaptured in 1292.

Two more expeditions were undertaken during his reign—not by the Sultan, but by his nephew, Ala-ud-din, who, in 1292, invaded Malwa and captured the town of Bhilsa which was probably allowed to remain in native hands. At this place he acquired a huge plunder. Here he heard stories of the great southern kingdom of Devagiri and its fabulous wealth, and his imagination was fired by the ambition of conquering southern India. On return, Ala-ud-din was promoted to the governorship of Awadh in addition to that of Kara. Ala-ud-din's next expedition was undertaken in 1294 against the king of Devagiri, Rama Chandra Deva, whom he defeated. He brought from Devagiri a huge booty amounting to many thousand pounds of gold, pearls, gems and silver and one thousand pieces of silk cloth.

The 'New Muslims'

The kingdom of Delhi was disturbed in Firoz's reign by a Mongol invasion. A huge Mongol army, said to be one lakh fifty thousand strong, under the command of a grandson of Hulagu, invaded the Panjab in 1292 and advanced as far as the town of Sunam. Sultan Firoz showed great activity and marched quickly to encounter the invader on whom he inflicted a severe defeat. The Mongols made peace. Their army was permitted to retreat peacefully. One of the descendants of Changiz Khan, named Ulugh, entered Firoz's service, embraced Islam and settled down in Delhi. Firoz gave a daughter in marriage to him. He and his followers became known as the 'New Muslims'.

The death of Jalal-ud-din

During the absence of Ala-ud-din from Kara some of the officers of the Sultan tried to convince the latter that Ala-ud-din was an extremely ambitious youth and had his eye on the throne; he should-

therefore, be suppressed in time. The Sultan, whose credulity was encouraged by the smooth words of Ulugh Khan, Ala-ud-din's brother, declared that there was no reason why Ala-ud-din should be inordinately ambitious when he loved him as a son and was prepared to do everything for him. Ulugh Khan persuaded the Sultan to believe that Ala-ud-din was anxious to present the immense wealth that he had brought from Devagiri, but he was afraid of coming to Delhi and waiting on the Sultan as the Devagiri expedition had been undertaken without the royal permission. Jalal-ud-din disregarded the protests of his officers and decided to proceed to Kara to meet his nephew and son-in-law. He set out from Delhi and travelled by boat, while his army proceeded by land under the command of Ahmad Chap. Ala-ud-din crossed the Ganga to Manikpur and, keeping his army in readiness, sent his brother to lure the Sultan into the trap so cleverly laid for him. Ulugh Khan waited on the Sultan and requested him not to permit his army to cross to the eastern bank of the river, as Ala-ud-din was still full of apprehension and might commit suicide or take refuge by flight. Objections were raised by the courtiers that Ala-ud-din had not come in person to wait on the Sultan and that his army was drawn in battle array. Ulugh Khan replied that he was busy in preparing a feast and making arrangements for the presentation of the spoils from Devagiri and that his troops were drawn up in order to accord a befitting reception to the Sultan. Jalal-ud-din was satisfied by the explanation and proceeded to meet his nephew, followed by a few unarmed attendants. Ala-ud-din now advanced and bowed low before the Sultan. Jalal-ud-din affectionately raised him up and embraced him and then, taking him by the hand, led him towards the boat, sweetly talking with him on the way. Ala-ud-din now gave a signal to one of his followers, named Muhammad Salim, who aimed two sword blows at the Sultan. Jalal-ud-din was wounded and attempted to flee towards the boat crying "Ala-ud-din, wretch ! What have you done ?" Meanwhile another of Ala-ud-din's followers, coming up from behind, severed the Sultan's head from his body. The followers of the Sultan were put to death. Ala-ud-din raised the royal umbrella over his head and proclaimed himself king on 19th July, 1296. Jalal-ud-din's head was placed on a spear and paraded through the two provinces, Kara Manikpur and Awadh, then in the charge of Ala-ud-din

Estimate of Jalal-ud-din Firoz

Jalal-ud-din was the first Turkish Sultan of Delhi who placed before him the ideal of benevolent despotism. Though a successful general with powerful army at his back, he gave up the policy of militarism which had been the motive force of his predecessors for about a century. He was very anxious to reconcile the hostile elements in the court and the kingdom by means of a generous policy. He allowed important Turkish officers, who were the followers of Balban's dynasty, to remain in places of power. He showed studied modesty almost to the extent of self-effacement. As has been said, the Sultan did not ride in the courtyard of Balban's palace and refused to sit upon the old throne because he had stood before it as a servant and had a new throne made for himself. It is too much to believe that a lifelong soldier and general like him possessed such natural modesty. Obviously, it was policy. Jalal-ud-din did not undertake any notable military expedition against the Hindu chiefs. Probably he thought that the interests of the State demanded consolidation. During the three years of the rule of Kaiqubad and Kayumars, the administration of Delhi had been thrown out of the gear. It required concentrated attention The charge of pusillanimity does not hold water, for he successfully defended the north-western frontier of the Sultanate and inflicted a crushing defeat on the Mongols who had, therefore, to make peace and settle down in Delhi as peaceful citizens. His rule was not in any way remarkable; but it must be admitted that for the first time in the history of the Sultanate of Delhi there was a king who made some attempt at conciliating public opinion and reconciling the various elements of power among the Muslim population, Turkish, non-Turkish and Indian. Some historians are of opinion that owing to his policy of unbecoming leniency the State would have come to harm if his reign had been prolonged. They have, consequently, come to the conclusion that he was unfit to hold the sceptre in that age. This view seems to be erroneous, for Jalal-ud-din was not all kindness. He was as intolerant towards the religion of the vast majority of the people as his predecessors. He destroyed and desecrated temples and broke images at Jhain, as has already been shown. He could put even a Muslim saint to death, if he believed it to be desirable in the interest of the State. It is unfortunate that Barani picked up only those events of his reign which show him in bad light. That historian,

INDIA IN 1315 A.D.
Alauddin Khalji.

TRANS-OXIANA
Bukhara
Samarqand
Balkh
Qundaz
Ghur
AFGHANISTAN
Herat
Kabul
Ghazni
Kandahar
PERSIA
MONGOLS
BALUCHISTAN
Kalat
KASHMIR
Peshawar
Srinagar
Nandnah
Bhera
Sialkot
Kangara
Lahore
Jalandar
Dipalpur
Sarhind
Multan
Pakpattan
Thanesshwar
Semana
Uch
Bhatner
Hisar
Honsi
Delhi
Siri
Mandawar
Bijnor
Amroha
Badaun
Bhakkar
Nagaur
Tilpat
Mathura
Sehwan
Jaisalmer
Agra
Merta
Ajmer
Bayana
Jhain
Ranthambhor
Gwalior
Lucknow
Ayodhya
Jaunpur
Amarkot
Thatta
Siwana
Jalor
Chittor
Abu
VASSALS 1311
Anhilwara
Kalpi
Kara
Kashi
Chanderi
Kalinjar
Khajuraho
Allahabad
Patna
Rajmahal
Lakhanauti
Gaya
Nadia
Sonargaon
Chittagong
Ujjain
Bhilsa
Jabalpur
Dhar
Cambay
Mandu
KATHIAWAR
Somanath
Asirgarh
Navasari
Illichpur
Diu
Daman
Lasura
Deogiri
YADAVAS
Thana
Jalna
Bombay
Chaul
Poona
DEOGIRI (1307)
Kalyani
Bidar
Gulbarga
Dabhol
Raichur
Warangal
Rajamundry
TELINGANA (1303)
KAKATIYAS
Mudgal
Goa (Sandabur)
Vijayanagar
HOYSALAS (1310)
Konchi
Kampil
Dwarasamudra
Calicut
Tanjore
Madura
Rameshwaram
PANDYAS
CEYLON
Colombo
NEPAL
TIBET
CHINA
KAMARUPA
ORISSA
Jajnagar
BENGAL
BURMA
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL
ANDAMAN IS.

Boundary of the Empire

Conquered, but Semi-independent.

0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles

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who is the sole authority on his reign, was biased against Jalal-ud-din and, in fact, against all Khaljis. The truth seems to be that he was not over-mild, but was anxious to keep a balance between the contending parties. A moderate ruler is generally disliked by various parties by reason of his modesty and impartiality. Barring a few instances, such as the one of letting off the thieves by taking a promise from them not to commit theft again, the history of his reign shows that Jalal-ud-din knew when it was necessary to be firm and when not.

ALA-UD-DIN KHALJI, 1296-1316

Early career

Ala-ud-din was a nephew and son-in-law of Jalal-ud-din Firoz. He was a very active and spirited soldier and was gifted with a fund of commonsense and realism. He was known to be ambitious and must have given early promise of future greatness. On his uncle's accession, in 1290, he was promoted to the office of *amir-i-tuzak* and was, shortly after, appointed governor of Kara Manikpur, near Allahabad. The followers of Malik Chhajju flocked round him. Young Khalji soldiers, too, who were ambitious of rising to power and wealth, recognised him as the man of the hour who could be persuaded to strike for the throne of Delhi and occupy it and reward them for their valour and enthusiasm. These disgruntled men, being dissatisfied with the lenient policy of the aged king, Jalal-ud-din, spurred Ala-ud-din on to fight for the throne. But Ala-ud-din was shrewd enough not to precipitate action. He waited to strike only at a favourable opportunity. His first and more urgent work was that of increasing his followers and of gathering round him men of tried ability and sure loyalty. He kept his uncle and sovereign in good humour through his brother, who served as his representative at the court and looked after his interests there. He obtained the Sultan's permission to lead an expedition to Malwa. In 1292 he penetrated into the heart of Malwa, captured the town of Bhilsa and brought a huge sum of money and valuable articles as plunder. He sent a part of these to the Sultan who rewarded him with governorship of Awadh in addition to that of Kara. Ala-ud-din, thus, ruled over two provinces of his uncle's kingdom.

His recent success in Malwa whetted Ala-ud-din's appetite for further conquests. At Bhilsa he had heard stories of the pros-

perity of the southern kingdom of Devagiri and his imagination was fired by dreams of conquest of southern India. He obtained his uncle's permission to increase the number of his troops, but concealed from him his project of a Dakhin campaign. Immediately south of the Vindhya mountains there were, at this time, two flourishing kingdoms in the Dakhin, the kingdom of Devagiri in the west and that of Telingana in the east. Ala-ud-din resolved to raid the former. He made preparations for the enterprise and, placing Malik Ala-ul-mulk, his deputy, in Kara, he proceeded on the enterprise in 1294 with an army consisting of eight thousand horse. He cunningly gave out on the way that he was a refugee noble from Delhi going to seek shelter and service at Rajamundry in southern Telingana. In view of this, he was not suspected or opposed by any one on the way. He appeared all of a sudden on the northern frontier of Devagiri which was ruled by the Yadava king, Rama Chandra Deva. The Yadava ruler was taken by surprise. A greater part of his army was away from his kingdom under his son, Shankar Deva, who had gone on a pilgrimage. Rama Chandra hastily collected 2,000 to 3,000 soldiers and met the invader at Lasura, twelve miles from Devagiri. But he was defeated by Ala-ud-din's vastly superior army and compelled to take shelter within his fort. Ala-ud-din besieged the fort and gave out that his troops were only an advance guard of a big army of 20,000 horse who were coming from Delhi to join him. Rama Chandra was frightened by the news and agreed to make peace. He made over to the invader 1,400 pounds of gold, a large quantity of precious pearls and other things. Ala-ud-din was preparing to depart when the Raja's son, Shankar Deva, returned from the pilgrimage and, contrary to his father's advice, attacked the invader. Ala-ud-din divided his army into two parts. One was left to watch the city and prevent Rama Chandra from coming to the assistance of his son, while with the other he prepared to fight Shankar. He was on the point of being defeated when the second part of his army under Malik Nasrat moved from the border of the city to his assistance. Shankar thought that this was the army from Delhi about which Ala-ud-din had boasted. His nerves were, therefore, shaken and he suffered a defeat. Ala-ud-din once again besieged the fort of Devagiri. After a few days' fighting Rama Chandra discovered that the sacks with which he had provisioned the garrison contained salt instead of grain. He was compelled to

sue for peace. Ala-ud-din now imposed much harsher terms than before. He compelled Rama Chandra to cede to him the province of Illichpur and to pay him a very huge indemnity which consisted of "17,250 pounds of gold, 200 pounds of pearls, 58 pounds of other gems, 28,250 pounds of silver and 1,000 pieces of silk cloth." With this enormous booty he returned to Kara.

This was the first Turkish expedition to southern India. Ala-ud-din's success was well-deserved. His objective was separated from his base by several hundred miles and the entire region was unknown and the people were hostile to him. The successful expedition showed that Ala-ud-din was not only gifted with soldierly talent of a high order, but was also a man of great daring and dash, of organising ability and resourcefulness.

This remarkable success turned Ala-ud-din's head. He now aspired for the throne of Delhi. His followers had been egging him on to action. His domestic difficulties were also pointing the same way. His wife, who was a daughter of the Sultan, was on bad terms with him. She and her mother, the queen, intrigued against him at court and also embittered his private life. These domestic reasons prompted him to come to a decision in the matter as early as possible. As has already been related, he decoyed his uncle and had him murdered near Kara Manikpur on July 19, 1296, and crowned himself king.

His early difficulties

Ala-ud-din literally waded through blood to the throne of Delhi. He had expected it to be a bed of roses; but at least for some time, it actually proved to be one of thorns. He found himself surrounded by difficulties. He was a usurper and guilty of the murder of his uncle and his greatest benefactor on earth. For this reason he became the object of hatred for all decent and right-thinking people. Then, there were the nobles and followers of the late Sultan (called Jalali nobles) who were not expected to forgive the murderer of their patron. The most redoubtable supporter of the legitimists was the brave Ahmad Chap, who was one of the most fearless living soldiers in the Turkish dominion. Thirdly, Delhi was far off and the sovereignty of Hindustan was supposed to belong to the occupant of the throne in that capital city. The widowed queen, Malka-i-Jahan, thinking it to be dangerous to keep the throne vacant, made hasty arrangements to fill it by raising her second son,

Qadr Khan, to it and proclaiming him as Sultan under the title of Rukn-ud-din Ibrahim. If properly supported, the new king, Ibrahim, was likely to be a formidable rival to Ala-ud-din. Besides, there were powerful Hindu chiefs who chafed under the Turkish yoke and were waiting for an opportunity to get rid of it. Finally, the Mongols were hammering at the north-western gates of the Sultanate of Delhi. The situation, therefore, looked formidable and would have quelled a heart less stout than that of Ala-ud-din.

Occupation of Delhi

Ala-ud-din faced the manifold difficulties with a vigour and determination that recalled the early activity of Iltutmish. His initial hesitation and desire to retire into Bangal was given up in favour of a bold policy of striking at Delhi without loss of time. His resolution was strengthened by the welcome news that there was a rift among the supporters of the legitimists. Arkali Khan, the eldest living son of Jalal-ud-din, took objection to the elevation of his younger brother to the throne, refused to recognise him and sulked at Multan. Many of the partisans of Jalal-ud-din went to join him there. Encouraged by this division, Ala-ud-din proceeded towards Delhi, conciliating the public on the way by distributing the Dakhin money among them. His army swelled up to a gigantic figure. On the news of his approach, Ibrahim issued out of Delhi and an encounter took place between the two rivals at Badaun. Ala-ud-din got the better of his opponent without fighting. Most of Ibrahim's troops and followers deserted him to join Ala-ud-din who was able to proceed to Delhi at the head of sixty thousand horse and sixty thousand foot. Ibrahim fled towards Multan with his mother and followers. Ala-ud-din entered the capital and was formally crowned in the Red Palace of Balban on October 3, 1296.

The first act of the new sovereign was to conciliate the people so as to make them forget the heinous crime of which he had been guilty. He lavishly distributed the cash spoils from Devagiri. It is said that on his way from Kara Manikpur to Delhi he set up a *balista* before his tent at every halting place from which small gold and silver coins were scattered among the public. He continued this practice at Delhi for some days. People's memory is proverbially short; they forgot Ala-ud-din's treachery and ingratitude and most people began to talk of his lavish generosity. Almost all the important nobles and officers joined him and forgot the past. His

second act was to put down Rukn-ud-din Ibrahim and his supporters with the assistance of the new army of adventurers who had been drawn to him by lavish distribution of gold. An army, forty thousand strong, under Ulugh Khan and Hijabr-ud-din, was sent to Multan to dispose of Arkali Khan, Ibrahim and their mother. The city was captured without resistance and the princes were taken prisoners. Arkali, Ibrahim and Ahmad Chap were blinded and so also Ulugh Khan, the Mongol, who was a son-in-law of Jalal-ud-din. Malka-i-Jahan, the widowed queen, was thrown into prison. By a clever and tactful policy the new Sultan disposed of his rivals and their supporters and was firmly seated upon the throne.

The Sultan's success made it possible for him to punish those of the prominent nobles and officers who had deserted Rukn-ud-din Ibrahim and joined him for love of money. Ala-ud-din believed that such people who could desert one master and join another were not dependable men and as such, deserved punishment. Accordingly, he put some of them to death, blinded some others and imprisoned the rest of them. Their wives and children were deprived of all their property and reduced to beggary. Ala-ud-din made it a rule to profit by treachery and then to punish it.

His theory of kingship

As soon as he had established himself firmly, Ala-ud-din decided to revive Balban's theory of kingship. Like Balban, he believed in the majesty of the monarch and in his being God's representative on earth. He had the firm conviction that greater wisdom was given to the Sultan than to any other human being and that his will should be the law. He believed in the maxim that 'kingship knows no kingship' and that all the inhabitants of the country must be either his servants or his subjects. He decided that he would not be influenced by any individual or party in laying down his policy for the State. Throughout the thirteenth century two powerful groups had exercised influence on the Sultan of Delhi. The one was the nobility and the other was the order of the *ulema*. Ala-ud-din was not prepared to suffer the old aristocracy to set itself as a power in the State. He would not like them to influence his policy. He wanted to reduce them to the position of mere servants who could be appointed and dismissed by the Sultan at will. He inspired so much awe that no courtier had the courage to give him advice or to ask for any favour. The only man who could presume to advise

the king was his old friend, Ala-ul-mulk, the kotwal of Delhi. As regards the second group, namely that of the *ulema*, Ala-ud-din declared for the first time in the history of the Sultanate that he would not allow them to dictate to the Sultan in the administration of the State. He said that he knew much better than the religious divines to what was necessary and useful for the welfare of the state. He enunciated his policy in the following words : "I do not know whether this is lawful or unlawful; whatever I think to be for the good of the state or suitable for the emergency, that I decree; and as for what may happen to me on the Day of Judgment, that I know not." Thus to Ala-ud-din belongs the credit of being the first Turkish Sultan of Delhi to bring the Church under the control of the State and to usher in factors that might make the State secular in theory. Unfortunately, this policy was not followed up by his successors and the Turkish State in India, therefore, reverted to a theocracy soon after his death. Though he thus prevented the interference of the *ulema* in matters of administration, he did take advantage of Muslim fanaticism in his wars against the indigenous chiefs and people. In fact, he incited them to a high pitch of bigotry whenever he stood in need of the support of the Muslim public opinion or their military co-operation. Ala-ud-din did not cease to be a Musalman. He did not lose faith in the Muslim law and did not act against it. In fact, he remained as good a Musalman as any of his predecessors on the throne of Delhi.

Ala-ud-din did not think it necessary to invoke the sanction of the Khalifa's name for strengthening his claims to sovereignty. He did not apply for an investiture from the Khalifa. Yet he styled himself only as an assistant or a deputy of the Khalifa (*Yamin-ul-Khilafat Nasiri Amir-ul-Mumnin*). His object in doing this was not to pay homage to the Khalifa as to a political superior, but only to keep the tradition of theoretical Khilafat alive.

As regards the Hindus, Ala-ud-din does not seem to have looked upon himself as their king in the same sense as of the Muslims and responsible for their welfare. His policy, which was one of repressing them completely, was not due to a momentary vagary, but formed part of his settled ideology. He consulted the famous qazi Mughis-ud-din of Bayana about the position which the Hindus should be allowed to enjoy in his kingdom. The qazi replied : "The Hindus are designated in the Law as payers of tribute (*kharaj*

guzar) ; and when the revenue officer demands silver from them, they should, without question and with all humility and respect, tender gold. If the officer throws dirt into their mouths, they must, without reluctance, open their mouths wide to receive it. By these acts of degradation are shown the extreme obedience of the *zimmi*, the glorification of the true faith. God Himself orders them to be humiliated, (as He says, till they pay the *jizya*) with the hand and are humbled .... the Prophet has commanded us to slay them, plunder them and to make them captive .... no other authority except the great *Imam* (Abu Hanifa), whose faith we follow, has sanctioned the imposition of the *jizya* on the Hindus." According to all other theologians, the rule for the Hindus was "either death or Islam". Ala-ud-din heartily agreed with the qazi. He was happy that he had been following the above policy in regard to the overwhelmingly vast Hindu population in his dominions.

DOMESTIC POLICY

Suppression of rebellions; analysis of their causes

The early years of Ala-ud-din's reign were distracted by rebellions. The first rebellion was that of the Mongols who had settled in India since the time of Jalal-ud-din Firoz and were known as the New Muslims. In 1299 they had accompanied Nasrat Khan in his expedition to Gujarat. When, after the successful termination of the campaign, the army began its return march, the New Muslims, feeling discontented with the distribution of the booty, mutinied and became guilty of killing a nephew of Ala-ud-din and a brother of Nasrat Khan. Nasrat ordered an attack and slaughtered a considerable number of them. Some of them fled to Ranthambhor and took refuge with its ruler, Hamira Deva. Ala-ud-din avenged himself by putting the wives and children of the rebels, who were in Delhi, to death. The second rebellion was that of Akat Khan who was the son of the Sultan's brother. When the Sultan was proceeding to Ranthambhor he halted for some days at Tilapat to indulge in his favourite pastime of hunting. Seeing Ala-ud-din left all alone during the course of one of the hunting expeditions, Akat Khan ordered his troops to attack him. Ala-ud-din defended himself bravely until some soldiers of his escort came up. But Akat Khan, believing that the Sultan had been killed, returned to the army, announced his death and attempted to enter his *harem* to take

its possession. Meanwhile, the Sultan, who was saved by the timely assistance of his bodyguards, returned to his camp. Akat Khan along with his followers was put to death. This rebellion was followed by another, and of a more serious nature. Amir Umar and Mangu Khan, the two sons of his sister, raised the standard of revolt in Badaun and Awadh while the Sultan was busy in the siege of Ranthambhor; but they were defeated and imprisoned by the loyal governors of the provinces. A fourth rebellion occurred at the capital city of Delhi where Haji Maula, a disaffected officer, collected an army of ruffians and killed the kotwal, named Tamardi. He attempted to follow up his success by trying to lay hand on Ayaz, the kotwal of Siri. In this, however, he failed; but he placed a nominee of his own on the throne of Delhi and proceeded to capture power. The rebel was, however, defeated and killed by a loyal officer, named Malik Hamid-ud-din. These rebellions, occurring as they did, one after another, within the space of a few years, convinced the Sultan that there was something radically wrong in his system of administration. In consultation with his friends he made a close study of the existing state of affairs and came to the conclusion that the rebellions were due to four causes. These causes, according to Ala-ud-din, were : (1) the inefficiency of his spy system which kept the king ignorant of the doings of his officers and people; (2) the general practice of the use of wine which promoted fellowship and prompted people to indulge in rebellions and conspiracy; (3) social intercourse among the nobles and inter-marriages between them which gave them an opportunity to combine against the king; and (4) the excess of wealth in the possession of certain notable people which gave them leisure for idle thoughts and for indulging in plots and rebellions.

The ordinances

Having analysed the causes of rebellions, Ala-ud-din proceeded to prevent their recurrence. He issued four important ordinances. The first ordinance aimed at confiscation of all religious endowments and free grants of land. Many hundreds of families had been in enjoyment of free land to support themselves. Some of them held land from time immemorial. A class of idlers had, thus, come into existence which derived its subsistence without labour. Ala-ud-din's measure hit this class hard. They had to pay land tax for their holdings and tax collectors were required to extort from them as

much money as possible on any pretext that they liked. The Sultan's attack on private property yielded wholesome results from his point of view. We are told by Barani that gold was not to be seen except in the houses of great nobles or high officials or the topmost merchants. By a second ordinance the Sultan reorganised the espionage. An army of spies was created. News-writers and spies were placed in the houses of nobles and officers and in all offices, towns and even in important villages. They were required to report all occurrences fit for the Sultan's ear and likely to be useful. The result of this ordinance was that the gossip of nobles and officers and even of common people came to an end and they became filled with awe of the Sultan's wrath, for he knew not only their doings but even their designs and thoughts. The third ordinance prohibited the use of liquor and drug. The Sultan himself gave up wine and caused his wine vessels to be broken in a dramatic fashion before the gaze of the public. Wine was banished from Delhi and the suburbs of the city also were closely watched. The violators of the law were cruelly punished, but the people did not give up drinking. They resorted to smuggling. Some of them travelled twenty to twenty-five miles to satisfy their craving. Ala-ud-din ultimately realised that people could not be made sober by legislation and hence he relaxed the ordinance, permitted private manufacture and consumption of liquor; but its sale was prohibited, and so also wine parties were forbidden. By the fourth ordinance, Ala-ud-din ordered that nobles should not have social gatherings and that they should not inter-marry without his permission. This regulation was rigorously enforced. Social gatherings and friendly meetings of the nobles came to an end.

The Hindus reduced to poverty

Along with these four ordinances the Sultan devised special regulations to put down Hindus and prevent them from rebelling against his tyranny. He rigorously enhanced the land revenue, fixing it at one-half of the gross produce. Besides the land tax, he also imposed other burdens, such as, grazing tax on cattle, sheep and goats. Other taxes, such as, *jizya*, customs and excise taxes, were retained as before. The result was that the Hindus, who were mainly connected with land in one form or the other, were hit hard and reduced to extreme poverty. They were closely watched, and if any one of them made an attempt to

evade any of the taxes, he was severely punished. Hitherto the upper class of Hindu officers in the revenue department, such as, headmen, farmers of revenue and chaudharis, were leniently treated in matters of fixing the State demand of the land given to them and in that of collection of revenue. Ala-ud-din withdrew this concession and compelled the hereditary assessors and collectors of revenue to continue to work as before without any special remuneration. These regulations were very strictly enforced by the minister of finance, named Sharaf Qai, and the band of Muslim officers under him. The officers earned the hatred of the public for the rigour with which they enforced them. Writes Sir Woolseley Haig, "Hindus throughout the kingdom were reduced to one dead level of poverty and misery, or, if there were one class more to be pitied than another, it was that which had formerly enjoyed the most esteem, the hereditary assessors and collectors of the revenue." The contemporary historian, Zia-ud-din Barani, in summing up the effects of the measures observes : "the *chaudharis*, *khuts* and *muqaddams* were not able to ride on horse-back, to find weapons, get fine clothes, or to indulge in betel." Their wives were obliged, owing to poverty, to work as maid-servants in the houses of their Muslim neighbours.

Ala-ud-din made it an object of his policy to raise able men of low birth to eminence so that they might act as a counterpoise to the nobility and the clergy.

The standing army

In order to enforce the above regulations, to act upon the principles of his theory of kingship, to satisfy his ambition of conquest and to protect the country from the ever-recurring Mongol invasions, it was necessary for Ala-ud-din to have a powerful army. Royal despotism of the type that was Ala-ud-din's aim was impossible without a military force of a high order. With this object in view Ala-ud-din undertook the reform of the army. To him belongs the credit of being the first Sultan of Delhi to lay the foundation of a permanent standing army which was always kept in readiness for service at the capital. The army was directly recruited by the army minister (*ariz-i-mamalik*). It was paid in cash from the royal treasury. The pay of a trooper was 234 *tankas* a year, while one with an additional horse was paid 78 *tankas* more. The soldiers were supplied with horses, arms and other equipment at the expense of the State.

In order to do away with corruption and to prevent proxy at a military review or in the field of battle, Ala-ud-din instituted the practice of recording the descriptive roll (*huliya*) of individual soldiers in the army minister's register. To prevent the defrauding of the government by the substitution of a bad horse for a good one the branding of horses (*dagh* system) was introduced. These innovations were not altogether new. They had been known before in India and abroad. According to Farishta, the central army consisted of 4,75,000 cavalrymen. The strength of the infantry is not recorded by any contemporary writer, but it must have far exceeded the cavalry. The Sultan bestowed a great deal of personal attention on the organisation, equipment and discipline of his military establishment.

Control of the market

Such a huge army could not be permanently maintained without unduly straining the resources of the state. But an army of that size was an indispensable necessity, Ala-ud-din had not only to put down sedition and weed out rebellions, but he had also to fight the Mongols who were annually visiting our north-western frontier. He had, besides, the ambition of conquering the whole of India. He was, therefore, compelled to think of a device to cheapen the cost of the maintenance of his powerful military establishment. This he did by regulating the prices of grain, cloth and other necessaries of life and cheapening them so much that a soldier could live comfortably on a mere pittance. He fixed the prices of food-grains, cloth and other commodities far below the usual market rates. The State collected its revenue in kind from the *khalisah* lands and, if possible, also from the territory held by vassals and, thus, raised large stocks of grain. No one else was permitted to purchase grain from the tillers of the soil, except those merchants who were authorised by a permit to do so. All merchants in Delhi were required to register themselves in the office of the *shahana-i-mandi*. Advances were given to those merchants who did not possess enough capital of their own. The merchants had to sell all commodities at the fixed rates and no deviation was permitted. If a merchant failed to carry out the orders and sold a commodity underweight, the same amount of flesh was cut off from his body. All kinds of speculation and black marketing were rigorously put down. The officers of the Doab were required to furnish guarantee in writing that they would not permit anyone

to hoard grain. Similarly, merchants were not to hoard grain or other articles, but must sell them at demand. Notable persons, nobles, officers and other well-to-do people had to get permits from the office of the *shahana-i-mandi* before they could purchase costly articles from the market. These regulations were rigorously enforced by two officers who were called *diwan-i-riyasat* and *shahana-i-mandi* who were assisted by a judge called *sarai adl* and a host of subordinate officers. They performed their duties with strict honesty and regularity and punished everyone who was guilty of violating the regulations. The result of these measures was that corn, cloth and other things became very cheap. Price of other things, such as, horses, cattle, maid-servants and slaves fell considerably. Throughout the reign of Ala-ud-din the cost of living remained cheap and almost constant. Modern writers have bestowed lavish praise upon Ala-ud-din for the success of his economic policy. There is a difference of opinion as to whether the measures were enforced in all the territory under Ala-ud-din, or they were restricted to Delhi and its suburbs. The latter view seems to be correct. It was impossible to enforce the regulations in the whole of the country. Even so, Ala-ud-din deserves credit for successfully tackling this difficult problem. The lavish distribution of wealth from southern India had cheapened money and inflated prices. The inflation was largely restricted to Delhi and the surrounding areas. The Sultan's measures well attained the object he had at heart, that is, fighting inflation and reducing the cost of living.

The revenue policy

Ala-ud-din did not rest satisfied with the control of the market and cheapening the cost of living. He desired, at the same time, to augment his financial resources. Accordingly, he turned to the reform of his revenue department. His predecessors had not paid much attention to formulating a scientific revenue policy. They had contented themselves with the time-honoured system which they had inherited from the Hindu times. But Ala-ud-din was a bold administrative reformer. He not only wished to introduce vigour and efficiency in the administration, but also desired to make a fundamental change in order to tap the resources of the country and increase his revenue to the utmost limit. With this object in view, he introduced a series of new measures which transformed the revenue rules and regulations of the Sultanate of Delhi. His first measure was to con-

fiscate land held mostly by Muslim grantees and religious men as *milk* (proprietary rights given by the state), *inam* (free gift), *idrarat* (pensions) and *waqfs* (endowments). It is too much to believe that all such land was confiscated and annexed by the state. Most probably, most of the land of the above description was attached; but some assignees were left untouched, as we have undoubted evidence of their existence in the beginning of the next reign. His second measure was to withdraw all the privileges which the Hindu *muqaddams* (headmen), *khuts* (farmers of revenue) and *chaudha* (revenue collectors) had enjoyed for generations, as we have already seen. These three classes of revenue officers were paid their dues as before; but, like all others who were connected with the land, they had to pay the land, house and grazing taxes. Thus, neither the Muslims nor the Hindus were left with any special privilege in the matter of land revenue. His third measure was to increase the State demand to the highest point possible. He fixed the State's share at fifty per cent of the gross produce of the land.[1] Over and above this, he charged, as has been related already, house tax, grazing tax and export and import duties. The Hindus, of course, were required to pay the *jizya* in addition. His fourth regulation was the introduction of the measurement of land with a view to ascertain the amount of land in the possession of each cultivator and the actual produce thereof. Although measurement of land was the usual feature of the revenue administration during the Hindu times and must have continued in some of the indigenous principalities, it was not adopted by any of the predecessors of Ala-ud-din. The credit of reviving it goes to this notable Khalji ruler who also made arrangement for ascertaining from the *patwari's* records the amount of arable land and revenue from each village in this dominions as a preliminary to his land settlements (*bandobast*). He employed honest and competent revenue officers to enforce the above regulations. We are told by the historian, Zia-ud-din Barani, that in matters of the revenue assessment and collection the entire kingdom was treated as a single village ; but from what Barani himself has written, it seems that measurement could not be introduced in all the provinces of Ala-ud-din's dominions. It was confined to some parts only. The net result was that the revenue increased considerably and all classes of

[1] As far as the Muslims were concerned, he probably charged from them one-fourth of the produce as land-revenue

the population, including cultivators, landholders, merchants and traders, were required to shoulder the burden. But whether Ala-ud-din desired it or not, the brunt of the burden had to be borne by the Hindus, a vast majority of whom were closely connected with the land.

Ala-ud-din was not in favour of grant of land to soldiers and officers in lieu of their salaries. Yet many men continued to enjoy the *iqtas* during his time as it was not possible to abolish the system altogether, specially in the newly conquered territories.

Centralisation of the administration

With a large army at his back, Ala-ud-din was able to suppress all lawless elements in his dominions and to take steps for the complete concentration of authority in his hands. Although there were the ministers, as usual, yet like Louis XIV of France or Frederick the Great of Prussia, Ala-ud-din was really his own prime minister. His ministers were secretaries or glorified clerks who had to carry out his will and look after the daily routine of administration. He did consult them whenever he liked, but he was not bound to accept their advice. The governors of provinces or *muqtis*, too, unlike in the days of his predecessors, were brought under greater control of the central government. His espionage, developed to frightful perfection, overawed the nobles and courtiers who feared to exchange views among themselves or even to talk aloud. We are told by the historian, Barani, that they communicated their thoughts by means of signs. While the Sultan put down the old nobility ruthlessly he raised the common people, who were possessed of merit and loyalty, to positions of importance. Throughout the kingdom no one could claim equality with the Sultan. All were reduced to the position of his vassals, servants or subjects. Under him the Sultanate reached a high watermark of despotism, the like of which had been unknown in India for ages.

FOREIGN POLICY

Project of conquests

Ala-ud-din was one of the most ambitious rulers that ever sat upon the throne of Delhi. After he had attained some success against the rebels and invaders, sometimes he dreamt of emulating the example of Alexander the Great and conquering the whole world. He even wanted to establish a religion of his own. One of his honest

and experienced courtiers, Ala-ul-mulk, the kotwal of Delhi, advised him to give up the wild project of founding a new religion, and to undertake the difficult, but desirable, task of conquering the whole of India before embarking on the conquest of the world. Ala-ud-din accepted the advice and set before him a grand scheme of subduing the independent Hindu states outside the borders of the Sultanate of Delhi. His foreign policy, therefore, was directed towards the achievement of one aim, namely, not to leave any independent Hindu chief in the country. It was not necessary to wait for any plausible cause or even pretext before invading a neighbour's territory. His wars were mostly unprovoked and undertaken in pursuit of a resolute ideal, namely, the conquest of the entire country. His policy of conquests may be divided into two parts : (1) conquest of northern India, and (2) conquest of south India.

CONQUEST OF THE NORTH

Gujarat

In 1299 he despatched an army under Ulugh Khan and Nasrat Khan for the conquest of Gujarat. That flourishing kingdom with its capital at Anhilwara (modern Patna), though raided more than once, had never been subdued by any Turkish invaders. It was ruled by the Baghela ruler, Karan. The Delhi army besieged Anhilwara and captured it, and Karan's wife, Kamla Devi, fell into the hands of the invaders. But Raja Karan escaped with his daughter, Deval Devi, and took shelter with Rama Chandra of Devagiri. The entire kingdom was occupied. Nasrat Khan found at Cambay a Hindu eunuch, named Kafur, whom he sent with the rich booty to Delhi. This boy eventually rose to be the prime minister of Ala-ud-din's kingdom. The rejoicing of the victors was disturbed by a rebellion of the new Muslims, or Mongols settled in India, on the question of the division of the spoils. They were, however, ruthlessly put down and almost exterminated.

Ranthambhor

Ala-ud-din's next expedition was directed against the fortress of Ranthambhor, formerly a Muslim outpost in Rajasthan, but at that time ruled by Hamir Deva, a descendant of the famous Chauhan king, Prithviraj II. There were two causes of the expedition. Firstly, it was a pious duty to recover a fortress that had formed part of the Turkish Sultanate of Delhi. Secondly, Hamir Deva had given

shelter to some of the rebellious New Muslims and Ala-ud-din thought it desirable to punish him for this audacity. Accordingly, Ulugh Khan and Nasrat Khan were sent against Hamir Deva. They occupied Jhain and besieged Ranthambhor, but were beaten. Nasrat Khan was killed and Jhain was recovered by the Rajputs. Ala-ud-din was obliged to proceed to Ranthambhor in person. The siege lasted for one full year and yet there seemed no prospect of success. The Sultan, therefore, had recourse to treachery. Hamir Deva's prime minister, Ran Mal, was seduced and, with his collusion, the siege was brought to a successful conclusion. The besiegers escaladed the walls of the fortrees and obtained possession of it (July 1301). Hamir Deva and his family and the remnant of the garrison were put to the sword. Ran Mal paid the penalty for his defection and was put to death at the Sultan's orders. Ala-ud-din returned victorious to Delhi.

Chittor

The Guhilots of Mewar had come into conflict with Iltutmish on account of their pre-eminent position among our indigenous rulers and had repulsed that Sultan's attack on their kingdom. After Iltutmish's death Delhi made little attempt to reduce that powerful state to submission. Early in 1303, however, Ala-ud-din resolved to conquer it and, starting from Delhi on 28th January, besieged its capital Chittor. It is said that his principal motive was to secure Padmini, the peerless queen of the reigning king, Ratna Singh, and reputed to be the most beautiful and accomplished woman in the country. Modern writers, like G. H. Ojha, Dr. K. S. Lal and others, have rejected this story as a later concoction. Although Ala-ud-din's ambition to establish his claim to be the ruler of the whole of India and his realisation of the fact that as long as Mewar remained independent he would not be able to make good that claim were enough reasons for undertaking the expedition, there is evidence, as we shall presently see, to believe that the Sultan did covet the fair Padmini. He surrounded the fort and pitched his white canopy on the top of an adjacent hillock, known as Chittauri. But all his attempts to capture the fort failed and the siege lasted for about five months. The brave Rajputs put up such a stout defence as elicited the admiration even of their foes. But it was futile to carry on an unequal struggle and Rana Ratna Singh had to submit (26th August, 1303). The women performed the awful rite of *jauhar* to

save their honour and the exasperated Ala-ud-din gave brutal orders for the slaughter of his brave enemies. Amir Khusrav, who was an eye witness, says that 30,000 Rajputs were killed in one day. The victorious Sultan left for Delhi after appointing his eldest son, Khizr Khan, governor of Chittor and naming it Khizrabad.

Chittor could not be held for long by the Khaljis owing, probably, to the constant trouble the patriotic Rajputs gave to the new administration. In 1311 Khizr Khan abandoned his post and the Sultan was obliged to appoint in his place a friendly chief named Maldeva, who was expected to keep the Guhilots in good humour and pay a tribute to Delhi. Soon after Ala-ud-din's death, Rana Hamir, the head of the junior branch of the Guhilot ruling family, drove away Maldeva and recovered possession of his ancestral State and its capital Chittor.

The Padmini episode

It has been mentioned that modern scholars have rejected as unhistorical the story that, baffled in his design to obtain possession of the fair Padmini, Ala-ud-din agreed to raise the siege and retire, if Ratna Singh only showed her beautiful face in a mirror, that he had the Rana arrested as soon as the latter conducted the gratified Sultan out of the fort to the latter's tents, and that he was rescued by the igenuity of his gifted spouse. Their reasons for rejecting the story are : (1) Amir Khusrav, who accompanied Ala-ud-din to Chittor and was present during the siege, has said nothing about it; (2) other contemporary writers, too, have made no mention of it; and (3) the story is a literary concoction of Malik Muhammad Jayasi, who wrote his *Padmavat* in 1540 A.D., and all the later writers have borrowed it from him. These arguments are based on a superficial reading of Khusrav's works and are fallacious. Amir Khusrav does throw a hint about the episode when he compares Ala-ud-din with Solomon, refers to his Seba as being in the fort of Chittor, and of himself as 'Hud-Hud', the bird that brought the news of the beautiful Bilquis, the queen of Seba,[2] to king Solomon of Ethiopia.[3] Khusrav's narrative makes it clear that Ala-ud-din entered the fort, accompanied by him, before it had capitulated "a fort to which

[2] Mr. Shrinetra Pande in his *History of Medieval India* (Hindi ed.) attempts to argue in favour of older writers and compares 'the queen of Seba' with 'wealth', an inanimate object. He ignores Habib's note that probably the poet refers to the fair Padmini.

[3] Khusrav's *Khazain-ul-Futuh*, translated by M. Habib, p. 48.

birds were unable to fly." The Rana came to Ala-ud-din's tents and submitted only after the Sultan had returned from the fort. After the Rana's submission the massacre of 30,000 Hindus took place by the disappointed Sultan's orders.[4] Reading between the lines brings to light the main incidents of the story. Khusrav, who was a court poet, was not in a position to write anything more than he actually did. And we know that he had omitted many an unpalatable truth, such as, Ala-ud-din's murder of his uncle Jalal-ud-din, the Sultan's defeat at the hands of the Mongols, the Mongol siege of Delhi, etc. It is wrong to say, as Ojha, K. S. Lal and others have contended, that the incident was concocted by Jayasi. The fact is that Jayasi wrote out a romance, the plot of which he had derived from Amir Khusrav's *Khazain-ul-Futuh*. Most of the romantic details of Jayasi's *Padmavat* are imaginary; but the main plot of the story that Padmini was coveted by Ala-ud-din and was shown in a mirror to the lustful Sultan, who had her husband arrested, is most probably based on historical truth. It seems the women performed *jauhar* after Ratna Singh's arrest and then the Rajputs fell on the invaders and rescued the Rana. But they were cut down to a man and the fort and the country passed into Ala-ud-din's hands.

Malwa

In 1305 Ain-ul-mulk Multani was directed to proceed to Jalor and Ujjain with a view to reduce the province of Malwa which is adjacent to Rajasthan, a major portion of which had already passed under the control of Delhi. Ain-ul-mulk fought a very severe battle with Raja Harananda on 9th December, 1305, and defeated him. The victory enabled the Delhi army to occupy Ujjain, Mandu, Dhar and Chanderi. Ala-ud-din appointed a governor to take charge of these places. Kanera Deva of Jalor also submitted and acknowledged the Sultan to be his suzerain.

Marwar

In or about 1308 the Sultan made arrangements for the conquest of Marwar, the only important region in Rajasthan that had so far eluded Turkish attempt at its subjugation. The Delhi army now besieged Siwana, the most important stronghold in that part of the country. The siege lasted for a long time and there seemed to be little prospect of its successful termination. Ala-ud-din's

[4] *Ibid*, p. 49.

patience was tired and he himself proceeded to the place and infused such vigour into the operations that the king of Marwar, Sitala Deva, agreed to sue for peace. He was compelled to appear before the Sultan and was allowed to remain in possession of the fort. But his country was occupied and divided among the Delhi nobles.

Jalor

Though Raja Kanera Deva of Jalor had sworn allegiance to the Sultan in 1305, he indulged in loose talk and boasted that he would be prepared at any time to meet Ala-ud-din in the field. This enraged the Sultan and, in order to humiliate the Raja, he sent an army against him under the command of a female servant of his palace, named Gul-i-Bihisht. She besieged Jalor. Kanera Deva was so hard-pressed that he was about to surrender when she died. Her son was defeated and killed by the Rajputs. But when some additional troops under Kamal-ud-din Gurg reached Jalor, the Delhi army defeated the Raja and put him and his relations to death. Jalor was then annexed.

The conquest of northern India was now almost complete and Ala-ud-din's empire extended over the whole of that region except Kashmir, Nepal, Assam and a part of the north-western Panjab.

CONQUEST OF THE DAKHIN

Ala-ud-din was determined to conquer the Dakhin also. He was the first Sultan of Delhi to cross the Vindhya mountains and to attempt to subjugate the southern peninsula. Mention has been made of his success against Rama Chandra of Devagiri in 1294. At that time there were four powerful kingdoms in southern India. They were : (1) the Yadava kingdom of Devagiri in the west, comprising Maharashtra, with its capital at Devagiri (modern Daultabad) ; (2) the Kakatiya kingdom of Telingana in the east, with its capital at Warangal; (3) the Hoysala kingdom, with its capital at Dwarasamudra, lying south of the river Krishna and comprising the whole of modern Mysore besides some other districts; and (4) the Pandya kingdom of the far south, with its capital at Madura. Unlike his policy in northern India, which he wanted to annex and rule directly, Ala-ud-din only desired to compel the rulers of southern India to acknowledge his supremacy and to send him annual tributes. He wanted to leave their dominions in their hands on

condition of vassalage. His chief object was to get as much wealth from that region as possible.

Failure against Warangal

Ala-ud-din had already reduced the kingdom of Devagiri to subjugation in 1294 and compelled its ruler to yield a huge treasure and to become his vassal. In 1303 he sent an army under Chhajju, nephew and successor of Nasrat Khan, to subjugate and plunder Telingana, the second kingdom in the Dakhin. This army marched through Bangal and Orissa and attacked Warangal, but was defeated by the Kakatiya ruler Prataprudra Deva, and compelled to flee back in disorder.

Devagiri re-conquered

Raja Rama Chandra of Devagiri had failed for three years to remit the revenue of the province of Illichpur which he had ceded to Ala-ud-din in 1294. In order, therefore, to reduce him to submission, an army was sent under Malik Kafur, who now held the office of the naib of the kingdom, in 1306-7. The naib was also required to bring Deval Devi, daughter of Raja Karan of Gujarat, as she was required by her mother, Kamla Devi, now in Ala-ud-din's *harem* at Delhi. Karan, who had established himself as the ruler of a petty principality in the Baglan region, had made arrangements for marrying Deval Devi to prince Shankar, the eldest son of Rama Chandra of Devagiri. While she was being escorted towards Devagiri, she fell into the hands of Alp Khan, governor of Gujarat, who was proceeding to join Malik Kafur in order to co-operate with him in the Devagiri expedition. Deval Devi was sent to Delhi and married to Khizr Khan, Ala-ud-din's eldest son. Alp Khan then defeated Karan who was compelled to retreat to Devagiri to take shelter there. Meanwhile, Malik Kafur had occupied Illichpur and appointed a Turkish governor to take charge of it. Then he marched upon Devagiri itself. Rama Chandra Deva submitted. He went to Delhi and made presents of enormous value to the Sultan from whom he received the title of *Rai-i-Rayan*. He was allowed to remain in possession of the State and was, besides, given the district of Navasari as a personal jagir.

Telingana

The failure in 1303 of an expedition against Warangal was rankling in the bosom of Ala-ud-din who was anxious to wipe off

the disgrace as soon as he could. Accordingly, Malik Kafur was sent to accomplish the work in 1308. Warangal, the capital city of the Kakatiya kingdom, was surrounded by two strong walls, the outer one of which was of earth, while the inner one was made of stone. Its ruler, Prataprudra II, who had defeated Chhajju's expedition in 1303, was taken by surprise. Kafur besieged Warangal and inflicted a heavy loss on the garrison inside by numerous assaults. So the Raja submitted and offered an indemnity of 300 elephants, 7,000 horses, a large quantity of cash and jewels and agreed to pay annual tribute. .

The Hoysala kingdom of Dwarasamudra

Ala-ud-din now planned to subjugate the third powerful Dakhin kingdom. In 1310 Malik Kafur and Khwaja Haji were against sent across the Vindhyachala mountains at the head of a large army. On entering the kingdom of Devagiri, where Shankar Deva had succeeded his father, Rama Chandra, in 1309-10, Kafur established a garrison at Jalna on the Godavari to protect his line of communication with Delhi. This step was taken because Shankar Deva's loyalty was not above suspicion. From Devagiri Kafur took the road to Dwarasamudra (Dwaravatipura). His movement was so rapid that the Hoysala ruler Vira Ballala III was taken by surprise. He was defeated and his capital was occupied by the invaders. Kafur plundered the rich temples of the town. The Hoysala king was obliged to pay an enormous war indemnity and to agree to become a vassal of the Sultan of Delhi.

The Pandya kingdom

From Dwarasamudra Kafur marched to the Pandya kingdom which lay in the extreme south of the Dakhin peninsula. The succession to the throne of this kingdom was disputed between two brothers, named, Sundara Pandya and Vira Pandya. Sundara Pandya, who was defeated by his brother, Vira Pandya, had gone to Delhi and sought Ala-ud-din's help for the recovery of his throne. That was why Kafur had ventured to advance rapidly into an unknown region. He reached Madura which was abandoned by the ruler, Vira Pandya. Kafur plundered the place and destroyed its chief temple and then proceeded eastwards to the sea-coast. He reached Rameshwaram on the island of Pamban, where he destroyed the great temple and built a mosque and named it after Ala-ud-

din. After these exploits he returned to Delhi in 1311 with enormous spoils "which included 312 elephants, 20,000 horses, 2,750 pounds of gold, equal in value to ten crores of *tankas* and chests of jewels. No such booty had ever before been brought to Delhi."

The last Dakhin expedition

Shankar Deva of Devagiri was a patriotic and energetic ruler, and was anxious to throw off the Turkish yoke. After Kafur's return to Delhi he did not remit the usual yearly tribute. The Sultan, therefore, despatched Malik Kafur once again in 1313 to call Shankar Deva to account. There was another reason for the expedition. Prataprudra of Warangal had written to the Sultan to send some officer to receive his tribute there, as Delhi was so far off from his capital. Kafur appeared at Devagiri. Shankar Deva was defeated and killed. From Devagiri he proceeded to Gulbarga, which he captured. Next, he occupied the territory between the Krishna and the Tungabhadra rivers and established garrisons at Raichur and Mudgal. Now he proceeded westward and took the sea-ports of Dabhol and Chaul. After this he again invaded the Hoysala kingdom of Vira Ballala III. After all these conquests Kafur returned to Delhi with valuable spoils.

The conquest of the Dakhin was now complete. Almost the whole of southern India was brought under the suzerainty of Delhi. But southern India was not annexed. Only a few garrisons of Turkish troops were established at important towns.

The Mongol invasions : North-Western Frontier policy

Ala-ud-din's reign was greatly disturbed by a series of Mongol invasions which threatened not only the Panjab, Multan and Sindh but even the capital city of Delhi and the fertile region of the Ganga-Yamuna Doab. It will be recalled that Balban had been prevented from following the policy of conquest of the neighbouring Hindu principalities owing to the threat of ever-recurring Mongol raids on his frontier. Ala-ud-din, however, was much more able and adventurous than Balban. He could successfully keep the Mongols in check and, at the same time, pursue a policy of aggressive warfare in the interior of India. It is said that he repelled more than a dozen Mongol invasions. The Mongols had begun to give him trouble right from the beginning of his reign and continued to do so till 1308. Ala-ud-din could, therefore, enjoy repose from this trouble for a little over seven years only.

The first Mongol invasion occurred at the end of 1296 when Ala-ud-din had been only a few months on the throne. Zafar Khan, one of his four bosom friends, was despatched against them. He encountered the invaders near Jalandar and defeated them with great slaughter. The second invasion took place in 1297. This time the Mongols captured the fortress of Siri very near Delhi, but Zafar Khan, upon whom had devolved the work of guarding the north-western frontier, defeated the invaders, recaptured the town after a short siege and took the Mongol leader with 1,700 of his followers, including their wives and children, prisoners and sent them to Delhi. In 1299 the Mongols appeared again under their leader, Qutlugh Khwaja, who had an army of two lakh Mongols under his command. Their object this time was not plunder but conquest. They marched to the neighbourhood of Delhi without molesting the inhabitants and prepared to besiege the capital city. It was a time of dangerous crisis for the Sultan who sought the advice of his friend, Ala-ul-mulk, as to the measures to be adopted for the safety of the capital. The kotwal advised him to temporise with the invaders instead of attacking them at once. Ala-ud-din, however, refused to accept this advice and attacked the Mongols the next morning. The advance guard of the royal army was led by Zafar Khan who defeated the enemy and pursued him relentlessly. He was drawn away from the main part of the royal army and was surrounded and slain by the Mongols. But the invaders lost heart and fled back to their country. The impression created by Zafar Khan proved so lasting that Mongol soldiers urged their weary horses to drink water "by asking whether they had seen Zafar Khan that they feared to slake their thirst !" Ala-ud-din, however, did not seem to have taken seriously the loss of such a valiant commander as Zafar Khan, for he looked upon him as a dangerously ambitious man.

The fourth important Mongol invasion occurred at a time when the Sultan was occupied in the siege of Chittor and when one of his armies had suffered a great reverse in Telingana. A Mongol army 12,000 strong, under their leader, Taghi, reached and encamped near Delhi. Their movement had been so rapid as to prevent the governors from the provinces to reach Delhi with their contingents. Ala-ud-din was obliged to take shelter in the fortress of Siri where he was besieged for two months. The Mongols plundered the surrounding country and carried their raids even into the streets of

Delhi. But, fortunately, the Mongols withdrew after three months of campaigning, as they were not experienced in the art of capturing towns by a regular siege.

Seeing that huge Mongol armies had twice reached Delhi without any hindrance or opposition on the way, Ala-ud-din took effective measures to protect the frontier so as to prevent a future raid on his capital. He repaired the old forts in the Panjab, Multan and Sindh, and built new ones. All these were garrisoned with powerful troops. Besides, he posted an additional army charged with the duty of guarding the frontier. He appointed a special governor of the frontier region who became known as the Warden of the Marches.

Inspite, however, of the above measures, a Mongol army, led by Ali Beg, a descendant of Changiz Khan, raided the Panjab and, evading the frontier garrisons, appeared in the neighbourhood of Amroha, plundering and burning the country on the way. Malik Kafur and Ghazi Malik were sent to encounter the invaders. They intercepted the invader while they were on their return journey, laden with huge plunder. The Mongols were defeated and their leaders were taken prisoners. The two topmost Mongol chiefs were trampled to death by elephants. Other prisoners were put to death and their heads were built into the walls of the fortress of Siri. It was after this that the veteran military commander, Ghazi Malik, was appointed governor of the Panjab in 1305. He successfully defended the frontier throughout Ala-ud-din's reign. The Mongols appeared again in 1306. Crossing the Indus near Multan, they proceeded towards the Himalayas. plundering the country as usual. Ghazi Malik successfully barred their passage and attacked and killed a large number of them. Fifty thousand of the invaders, including their leader, Kabk, were taken prisoners. They were put to death and their wives and children were sold as slaves.

The last Mongol invasion took place in 1307-8. Their army was led by a chief named Iqbalmand. He crossed the Indus, but could not proceed much further when he was encountered, defeated and slain. Quite a large number of the invaders were taken prisoners and were sent to Delhi where they were put to death. The Mongols did not venture after that date (1308) to disturb Ala-ud-din, and the country remained immune from their barbarous inroads until the time of Qutub-ud-din Mubarak.

Last days and death

Ala-ud-din's last days were clouded with trouble and disappointment. Owing to hard work and excessive indulgence, his health was undermined and he was obliged to take to his bed. His wife and sons neglected him altogether and his malady was still further aggravated. The queen, who had been neglected by her husband, enjoyed herself with festivities in the palace, while Khizr Khan, his eldest son, could not spare time from his pleasures. The disappointed Sultan, therefore, summoned Malik Kafur from the Dakhin and Alp Khan from Gujarat and complained to them about the treatment of his wife and sons. Kafur, perceiving that the Sultan's end was near, hatched a conspiracy of putting away his rivals from his path of ambition and to seize the throne for himself. He made Ala-ud-din believe that Khizr Khan, the queen and Alp Khan had entered into a plot to take his life. Khizr Khan, therefore, was sent to the prison fortress of Gwalior and the queen was imprisoned in old Delhi. Alp Khan was put to death. The result of these tyrannical measures was very bad. Alp Khan's troops rose in rebellion in Gujarat. The Rana of Chittor drove away the Muslim garrison and reoccupied his capital. Harapala Deva, the successor of Shankar Deva in Devagiri, declared himself independent and banished the Turkish garrison from his country. The news of these rebellions aggravated Ala-ud-din's disorder and he died on 2nd January, 1316.

His estimate

Historians hold diametrically opposite views about the character and achievements of Ala-ud-din Khalji. According to Elphinstone, his reign was glorious, and, inspite of many absurd and oppressive measures, he was, on the whole, a successful monarch and exhibited a just exercise of his powers. V. A. Smith, on the other hand, considered Elphinstone's judgment as too lenient. According to him, "facts do not warrant the assertion that he exhibited a just exercise of his powers and that his reign was glorious." He concludes by saying : "In reality he (Ala-ud-din) was a particularly savage tyrant with very little regard for justice and his reign, though marked by the conquest of Gujarat and many successful raids, like the storming of the two great fortresses, was exceedingly disgraceful in many respects."

It is, however, universally admitted that Ala-ud-din was a very brave soldier and a successful general. His basic qualities were ambition, energy, courage, daring and resourcefulness. He could command the most faithful service from his subordinates and make them serve his interest. He was, besides, an able administrator and statesman. He was possessed of originality of a high order. He did not rest satisfied with administering the institutions that came to him as an inheritance from his predecessors; he was anxious to reform them. He even brought new institutions into existence for the benefit of himself and his kingdom. He was the first Turkish Sultan of Delhi to lay the foundation of a powerful standing army and to do away with corruption that had crept into the organisation. To him belongs the credit of being the first Turkish ruler in the land to reform the revenue rules and regulations and to introduce a system of measurement as a preliminary to fixing the State demand of the produce of the soil. He was, again, the first to revolutionise the conservative branch of revenue administration by his successful policy of putting an end to the privileges of the hereditary revenue officers and assignees of land. His successful control of the market and the tariff system had no parallel before or after him throughout the medieval period of our country's history. He was, also, the first Turkish conqueror who set his foot beyond the Vindhyachala mountains. He subjugated the whole of the Dakhin, making it subservient to the crown of Delhi. He thus gave political unity to almost the whole of the sub-continent of India. He completed Balban's work of consolidation by bringing the provinces under a more rigorous control of the central government and giving the Sultanate some measure of administrative uniformity. He had the wisdom and the courage to brush aside the interference of the Muslim *ulema* in the affairs of the State and to avow openly that in political and administrative matters secular considerations alone must prevail. Such an attitude was unknown to all his predecessors on the throne of Delhi.

Ala-ud-din may be called the first Turkish empire-builder in this country. Turkish imperialism reached its highest watermark under this ruler. While all his predecessors, including Balban, had shrunk from the task of defending the Sultanate of Delhi from the ever-recurring Mongol invasions and, at the same time, carrying on aggressive warfare in the interior of the country, Ala-ud-din success-

fully accomplished this twofold task. This alone entitles this Khalji ruler to a place higher than that occupied by any of his predecessors in the thirteenth century. He may, therefore, rightly be called the first Turkish emperor of India. Throughout his reign the country enjoyed complete peace and order. Brigandage was stamped out. "Justice was executed with such rigour that robbery and theft, formerly so common, were not heard of in the land. The traveller slept secure on the highway and the merchant carried his commodities with safety from the Sea of Bangal to the mountains of Kabul and from Telingana to Kashmir."

Though himself illiterate, Ala-ud-din was a great patron of learning and fine arts. There were many first-rate poets and scholars at his court, including such literary lights as Amir Khusrav and Amir Hasan of Delhi. He was a lover of architecture and one of his buildings, known as *Alai Darwaza,* which is an extension of the Qutubi mosque in Delhi, is, in the eyes of critics, the most beautiful and perfect specimen of early Turkish architecture. He built palaces and mosques also, such as the fort of Siri and the 'Palace of a Thousand Pillars', called Hazar Situn.

But there is another side of his character and personality. Ala-ud-din was not all good. He suffered from certain grave defects. His private life was marred by excessive indulgence in natural and unnatural sexual corruption. He was, by nature, selfish and had no regard for the ties of friendship or even filial relationship. He was cruel and almost savage in inflicting punishments. While Balban was ruthless in slaughtering the Hindus who resisted him in order to retain their freedom, Ala-ud-din did not spare Musalmans even. He awarded the barbarous punishments of mutilation and death for very ordinary crimes. He visited the sins of rebels and others on the heads of their innocent women and children Ala-ud-din was a believer in the policy of blood and iron. He resembled Bismarck, the German Chancellor, in subscribing to the theory that "the end justifies the means." He had no other consideration than the attainment of his objects by fair or foul means. In short, he was thoroughly unscrupulous and cruel. Some of the modern writers do not find fault with him for his policy of ruthlessness; for, according to them, certain amount of ruthlessness was necessary as he lived in an age of 'treachery and strife'. But this view is hardly correct. The masses of the Indian people were as innocent and free from guilt and even

from rebellious tendencies as they are now or in any period of our history. The trouble was that the Sultans of Delhi were foreign rulers and, as such, it never entered into their scheme of things to win the affection, or even the goodwill, of the common people. The greatest defect in Ala-ud-din's work was that his administrative system lacked permanence, as it was based on naked force and not on the goodwill of the people.

A balanced view of Ala-ud-din's work and achievements must give him a high place among the rulers of Delhi during the medieval age. He was, unquestionably, the ablest Sultan during the entire period of the Sultanate of Delhi. Only one ruler of the period, namely, Muhammad bin Tughluq, challenges comparison with him in constructive ability and breadth of vision. But Muhammad Tughluq failed disastrously, while Ala-ud-din Khalji achieved success in everything that he undertook.

QUTUB-UD-DIN MUBARAK, 1316-1320

Accession

Under the influence of Malik Kafur, Ala-ud-din had disinherited his eldest son, Khizr Khan, and nominated his minor son, Shihab-ud-din Umar, as his successor. On the Sultan's death this boy, aged about six years, was placed upon the throne by Malik Kafur who became the regent and *de facto* ruler. He caused Khizr Khan and his younger brother, Shadi Khan, to be blinded. The regent then married Ala-ud-din's widow, appropriated all her jewellery and property and, finally, threw her into prison. He imprisoned the third son of Ala-ud-din, Mubarak Khan, then aged seventeen or eighteen years, and sent some of his agents to take out his eyes; but Mubarak bribed these men and sent them back to slay Kafur, which task they performed without difficulty. The nobles then recognised Mubarak as regent for his brother. After acting for about two months in that capacity, Mubarak dethroned and blinded his brother and seized the throne for himself. He carried out his enthronement on April 1, 1316, and assumed the title of Qutub-ud-din Mubarak Shah.

Old ordinances cancelled

Mubarak began his reign well with the good-will of the nobles and the people. He released all prisoners and repealed all the harsh ordinances of his father's time. He recalled those of the old nobles

and officers who had been banished by his father. Thus he followed the policy of forget and forgive. The murderers of Malik Kafur, however, were punished, as they demanded extravagant honours for themselves. The compulsory control of the market was done away with, confiscated lands were restored to their legitimate owners, and many of the taxes were reduced. People at last heaved a sigh of relief. As Barani says, they were no longer in fear of hearing the words ".....do this, but do not do that; say this, but do not say that....." But the sudden removal of the strict ordinances produced an outburst of licence. There was a fall in the moral standard of the courtiers and the official class. The new Sultan, from almost the beginning of his reign, devoted himself to sensual pleasures and fell under the influence of a handsome favourite named Hasan who originally belonged to a depressed caste Bharvar —or Shepherd—and had recently become a convert to Islam. He was given the title of Khusrav[5] and raised to the position of prime minister. The king's example was followed by his courtiers. The administration became slack.

Rebellions : Devagiri and Madura reconquered

The lawless elements of the population at once took advantage of the change of administration. There was a rebellion in Gujarat. The Yadava ruler of Devagiri asserted his independence and some of the important states of Rajputana, particularly Marwar, became free. It became necessary for the king to restore order. Ain-ul-mulk Multani was sent to Gujarat; he succeeded in quelling the rebellion there. The Sultan's father-in-law, Zafar Khan, was now appointed its governor. Mubarak took upon himself the duty of recovering Devagiri. He set out for the Dakhin in 1317. Harapala Deva, the ruler of Devagiri, frightened by the news of the Sultan's approach, fled from his capital. But he was captured and was flayed and his skin was stretched open, while his head was placed on one of the gates of Devagiri. The whole of Devagiri was divided into districts and placed in the hands of Turkish officers. Garrisons were established in the country. Gulbarga, Sagar and Dwarasamudra were occupied and placed under Muslim officers. Mubarak built a mosque at Devagiri from the materials of the Hindu temples which

[5] For a discussion of Khusrav's origin, see my paper in *Indian Historical Quarterly*, 1953.

he demolished. He appointed Malik Yaklaki to be the governor of Devagiri and sent Khusrav to reduce Madura and then returned to Delhi.

Conspiracy against Mubarak

During his journey back to Delhi, a conspiracy was hatched against the life of the Sultan. The chief conspirator was his cousin, Asad-ud-din, son of Yaghrush Khan, brother of Firoz Khalji. The conspirators planned to kill the Sultan and place a ten-year old son of Khizr Khan on the throne. One of the conspirators revealed the plot to the king who had the conspirators arrested and put to death. The conspiracy so much enraged Mubarak that he ordered all the male descendants of Yaghrush Khan to be put to death. At the same time, his brothers, Khizr Khan, Shadi Khan and Shihab-ud-din, were killed at his orders. He then married Deval Devi, Khizr Khan's widow.

Mubarak's conduct : administration disorganised

Mubarak's success in the Dakhin seems to have turned his head. He had his father-in-law, Zafar Khan, and his favourite, Shahim, whom he had left as his regent at Delhi during his absence in the Dakhin, murdered without any apparent reason. He neglected the administration and threw himself heart and soul into sensual pleasures. It is said that he appeared before his courtiers in female attire. He allowed jesters and courtesans to greet old and experienced nobles with lewd gestures and foul abuse. Barani tells us that sometimes the Sultan would run naked among his courtiers. The result was that all respect for the crown vanished and lawlessness everywhere raised its head. Malik Yaklaki, governor of Devagiri, raised the standard of rebellion and proclaimed himself king. He was, however, defeated by the loyal officer in the Dakhin and sent a prisoner to Delhi. Mubarak, instead of punishing him with death, ordered only his nose and ears to be cut off. He even pardoned him a little after and appointed him governor of Samana; but the associates of Yaklaki were put to death. Khusrav's half-brother, Hisan-ud-din, who was appointed governor of Gujarat in place of Zafar Khan, revolted there, but like Yaklaki, he was defeated by some of the loyal nobles and sent a prisoner to Delhi. The king forgave him altogether in order to please his favourite, Khusrav. Khusrav himself harboured a design of carving out a

kingdom for himself in the Dakhin. When some of the officers informed the king about his treasonable intention, Mubarak disbelieved it. He summoned Khusrav to the capital and punished his accusers with dismissal and imprisonment.

Mubarak murdered

Khusrav had realised that it would not be possible for him to seize the throne without an army of his own. He sought the king's permission to raise a corps of 40,000 horse, consisting mostly of the Bharvars of Gujarat, a tribe to which Khusrav himself belonged. Mubarak agreed. Next, Khusrav requested that his relations and friends should be permitted to enter the palace gates and see him inside the palace, if they had any urgent work with him. This request was also granted. Khusrav had now his plan ready for the assassination of the king. A warning, however, was given to Mubarak by his former tutor. The Sultan paid no heed to it. On the night of April 14, 1320, when Khusrav's conspiracy had matured, his troops entered the palace and cut down the royal guards. The noise reached the upper storey of the palace and the Sultan enquired from Khusrav as to what it was about. Khusrav replied that men were trying to catch some horses which had broken loose. As Khusrav spoke these words his followers reached Mubarak's apartment. The Sultan sprang up in terror and ran towards the female apartments of the palace; but Khusrav seized him by the hair, while one of his followers named Jaharia stabbed him to death. Mubarak's head was severed from the body and thrown down into the courtyard.

His estimate

Qutub-ud-din Mubarak was the last king of the Khalji dynasty, and he was also the most worthless. He did not lack ability or courage, as he displayed both during the first year of his reign in his campaigns in the Dakhin. But his character was completely undermined by his excess in venery and prostitution. He was so infatuated by his favourite, Khusrav, that he failed to see the inordinate ambition of this low-born convert. Mubarak suffered a just penalty for his profligacy, folly and wicked conduct.

It was reserved for this licentious and good-for-nothing Khalji ruler to get rid of the age-long tradition of theoretical

unity of the Muslim world. He kicked the idea of Khilafat and assumed the title of Khalifa, the viceregent of God of heaven and earth.

NASIR-UD-DIN KHUSRAV SHAH,[6] 15th April—5th Sept., 1320

Immediately after Mubarak's murder, Khusrav summoned the chief nobles to the court and obtained their approval to the *fait accompli*. With their consent he ascended the throne under the title of Nasir-ud-din Khusrav Shah (15th April, 1320). He confirmed most of the old officers and nobles in their posts; but those of them who were known to be partisans of the Khaljis were removed. Some of them were put to death. Khusrav married Deval Devi, the widow of Khizr Khan. He proceeded to win over as many of the nobles and officers as possible by a lavish distribution of honours and rewards. Wahid-ud-din Quraishi, who was a minister of Mubarak, was given the title of *Taj-ul-mulk* and was allowed to retain his post. Ain-ul-mulk Multani was confirmed and further promoted and given the titles of Alam Khan and *Amir-ul-Umara*. Fakhr-ud-din Muhammad Jauna was appointed master of the horse, while his father, Ghazi Malik, remained governor of the Panjab and warden of the marches. Several other Turkish officers, such as the governor of Multan, the governor of Samana named Malik Yaklaki, and the governor of Siwistan, gave their allegiance to the new ruler. Some of the most renowned and pious *shaikhs*, particularly the celebrated Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Auliya of Delhi, were won over by distribution of money. They supported the new reign. Khusrav's own followers, who were mostly members of his tribe from Gujarat and Hindu by religion, were richly rewarded for their co-operation and services.

But Khusrav was an Indian Musalman, one who had become a convert to this religion but had originally been a Hindu of Bharvar or shepherd caste from Gujarat. This was intolerable to the racial pride of the arrogant Turks who had so far monopolised power and who would not brook the idea of an Indian Musalman appropriating to himself the sovereignty of the kingdom. Hence some of the Turkish *maliks* and *amirs* raised the cry that Islam was in danger in Hindustan. They charged Khusrav with being a half Hindu and with insulting Islam and promoting idolatrous worship in the palace.[7]

[6] See Appendix A.

[7] For Hindu worship in the palace, some of Khusrav Shah's relations, who were Hindus, were responsible. This is clearly recorded in *Tabqat-i-Akbari* (Persian Text), Vol. I, p. 187.

Zia-ud-din Barani, the historian, who belonged to their fraternity, has indulged in bitter invective and tried to show that Khusrav was thoroughly unpopular with all the nobles and the people. The fact, however, is that he was supported by a large number of influential Muslim commanders and officers and had the moral support of important Muslim divines, such as Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Auliya. Only a small minority, for racial as well as for personal reasons, was opposed to him. Ghazi Malik, the warden of the marches, had his own ambition. He was, moreover, representative of the thirteenth century Turkish oligarchs who were bitter opponents of the claims of Indian Musalmans to have a share in the government of the country. So he put himself at the head of a movement against Khusrav and made an attempt to win the support of the governors of Siwistan, Multan and Samana, but without success. He invited Ain-ul-mulk Multani to join the party. None of these, however, gave their support to Ghazi Malik, probably because they did not see any danger to Islam. Having failed in this Ghazi Malik resorted to intrigue and instigated the lower officers in the above three provinces against the new king and fomented a rebellion. This plan was successful. The reactionary officers in alliance with the fanatical population of these three provinces were easily won over.

While this move was going on silently, Fakhr-ud-din Muhammad Jauna, son of Ghazi Malik, escaped secretly one night from Delhi and joined his father at Dipalpur. When all was ready, Ghazi Malik marched against Delhi. Malik Yaklaki, governor of Samana, opposed him, but was defeated. He was again encountered at Sirsa by Hisam-ud-din, the new king's half-brother; but the latter was defeated and put to flight. As Ghazi Malik approached Delhi, Khusrav came out of the capital and met the rebels near Indraprastha. Before the battle Ain-ul-mulk withdrew along with his troops to Malwa. Yet Khusrav fought boldly on 5th September, 1320, but was defeated and killed.

Since the establishment of the Turkish Sultanate in northern India only two attempts were made by Indian Muslims to seize power. The first notable Indian Musalman to aspire *de facto* control of government was Imad-ud-din Rayhan, who ruled as prime minister for a period of one year only. But he fell a prey to the racial arrogance of the Turkish monopolists. Khusrav was the second Indian Muslim to aspire for power, not as a minister but as a full-fledged

sovereign; but he, too, became a victim of Turkish intrigue and racial intolerance. Khusrav was a Musalman. It did not matter what he had been before his conversion to that religion. As Islam claims to be a democratic religion and believes that kingship is not the monopoly of any privileged class but belongs to those who have the power and ability to hold it, there was no reason why Khusrav should have been debarred from enjoying the position he had won. The charge that he insulted Islam and allowed idolatrous worship and 'the use of the copies of the *Quran* as seats and stools' was nothing more than an interested propaganda designed to cloak the ambition of Ghazi Malik and his son, Jauna Khan. The *Shaikh-ul-Islam* (Nizam-ud-din Auliya) at Delhi should have been a better judge of the king's religious conduct than the military governor in a far-off province. If Khusrav was a murderer of his benefactor, so was Ala-ud-din Khalji and, possibly, Balban also. It is a pity that modern writers of our medieval history have become dupes of exaggerated denunciations indulged in by Barani and copied by later historians. Ghazi Malik was successful and captured the throne of Delhi in September 1320.

Weakness of the Khalji system

The empire built up by Ala-ud-din rested on a weak foundation and, therefore, it did not survive its founder. The reasons for its ultimate failure are not too difficult to perceive. Some of the very elements which had contributed most to its up-building became in the long run the elements of weakness and instability—vital causes of its eventual downfall. The system depended upon the Sultan's genius. Individual genius has its limitations. Ala-ud-din was a genius; but he was also human. As he grew older he became less able to put up with exertion and fatigue. He became fond of ease and could not supervise the work of his subordinates who mismanaged things. There were rebellions before he closed his eyes in death. Secondly, Khalji imperialism was based on military force and not on the willing consent of the people. Force always tends to become tyrannical and cares more for glory than for the welfare of the people. This was so with Ala-ud-din whose administration became more and more unpopular as time passed on. The Turkish nobles, who were deprived of their power and prestige, were estranged. The Hindu chiefs groaned under the restrains and humiliations

imposed upon them. The Mongols, called the New Muslims, continued plotting and intriguing against him. Those of the nobles who still wielded some power and commanded prestige were alienated, as low-born upstarts were raised to positions of honour and equality with them. The rigours of the espionage terrified the middle and upper class people. The traders and merchants resented the strict control of the market. Thus, all classes of people were sick of the despotic administration and waited for an opportunity to throw it off. Ala-ud-din did not ensure the continuity of the system by giving the right kind of training to his sons and successors. Khizr Khan and his brothers grew up into weaklings, addicted to sensual pleasures and unfit to hold intact the big empire created by their father. Fortunately for the people, Ala-ud-din's favourite, Malik Kafur, who enjoyed ascendancy at the court, fomented quarrel in the royal household and brought about a rift in the ruling family. Royal authority was weakened, and this gave an opportunity to ambitious people to revolt. There were rebellions in the Dakhin, in Rajasthan and in some other parts of the country. Although Ala-ud-din's successor succeeded in putting down the rebellions, he had to make concession to the people by withdrawing most of the obnoxious regulations of his father's time. When he was murdered, four years later, the system fell with a mighty crash.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE

The Khalji Dynasty

Yaghresh Khan

- Nasiruddin
- Shihabuddin
- (1) Jalaluddin Firoz
  - (3) Alauddin
  - Almas Beg
  - Qutlugh Muhammad Ulugh Khan
  - Tighin
    - Akat Khan
      - Arkali Khan
      - (2) Ruknuddin Ibrahim
        - Khizr Khan
        - Shadi Khan
        - (5) Qutubuddin Mubarak
          - (6) Nasiruddin Khusrav (wazir of Mubarak) [Set aside by Ghiyasuddin Tughluq]
        - (4) Shihabuddin Umr
- Malik Khamosh
  - Asaduddin

14

THE TUGHLUQ DYNASTY

GHIYAS-UD-DIN TUGHLUQ SHAH, 1320—1325

Early career

Ghazi Tughluq was a man of humble origin. His father was a Turki slave of Balban and his mother a Jat woman of the Panjab. He seems to have begun his life as an ordinary trooper, but he rose to a position of importance by dint of his ability and hard labour. In 1305 he was appointed governor of the Panjab with his head-quarters at Dipalpur. He was entrusted with the duty of the protection of the north-western frontier from the Mongols. It is said that he encountered the invaders on twenty-nine occasions and defeated them. Hence he was called Malik-ul-Ghazi. Towards the end of Ala-ud-din's reign he became one of the few powerful Turkish nobles in the kingdom. He retained his position during the reign of Qutub-ud-din Mubarak. On his accession Khusrav tried to conciliate him and confirmed him in the governorship of the Panjab; but he and his son, Fakhr-ud-din Jauna, had their own ambition. This, together with Ghazi Malik's thirteenth century racial and religious orthodoxy, prompted him to organise the opposition to Khusrav Shah, who was, eventually, defeated and killed. After this he entered Delhi as a conqueror. He is said to have caused an enquiry to be made whether there yet remained any descendant of Ala-ud-din Khalji whom he might raise to the throne. It is doubtful whether he was sincere in this enquiry or whether he had made this display in order to win popular sympathy. Be that as it may, he ascended the throne on September 8, 1320, under the title of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq Shah Ghazi. He was the first Sultan of Delhi to add the word Ghazi (slayer of the infidel) after his name.

Domestic policy

The first work of the new Sultan was to conciliate the nobles and the people. He enjoyed the advantage of pure Turkish lineage and hence felt no difficulty in establishing his authority over the

remnants of the Turkish nobles and officers. He made an arrangement for giving away in marriage the Khalji girls who had survived the downfall of their house. Like a wise politician, he did not take steps against the nobles who had supported Khusrav and confirmed all important officers in their posts. He dealt strictly with the confirmed partisans of the late regime who were dismissed from their offices and deprived of their lands. He restored the lands of those who had been deprived of them by Ala-ud-din Khalji. He tried to recover the treasure which had been squandered by Khusrav or plundered during the confusion that followed his downfall; but he encountered much opposition from some of those who had been benefitted by its prodigal distribution. Large sums of money had been given away by Khusrav to the leading shaikhs of Delhi, some of whom returned it; but Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Auliya, who had received five lakhs of *tankas*, refused to make good the sum and replied that he had given it away in charity. The Sultan was highly enraged, but he was helpless as the Shaikh was a holy man and very popular with all classes of people. Ghiyas-ud-din endeavoured to denounce him "for indulgence in the ecstatic songs and dances of darveshes, a form of devotion regarded as unlawful by rigid Sunnis of the established religion." In this policy he did not succeed, as fifty-three theologians whom he consulted on this point did not find fault with the above form of devotion. With other people, however, his policy was successful and he recovered most of the treasure squandered by Khusrav Shah.

Ghiyas-ud-din followed the policy of encouraging agriculture and protecting the cultivators. He ordered that the *Diwan-i-Wizarat* should not enhance the land revenue of any *iqta* beyond one-tenth and one-eleventh in a year. His instructions were that the enhancement should be gradual and should be spread over a number of years. The state demand was not ascertained by measurement of the land as in the time of Ala-ud-din Khalji. He gave up the practice of survey of land as it did not work satisfactorily in the hands of his officers and as it required an elaborate and technical staff. Instead, the Sultan ordered that the land revenue should be assessed by the collectors in person, which meant in practice the revival of the old sharing (*Ghalla-Bakhshi* or *Batai*) and *Nasq* or *Kankut* systems. The revenue collectors were not to be paid a commission on the sum collected by them, but by grants of land which were exempted from

taxation. In addition, they were permitted to charge a nominal fee from the cultivators. Here also Ghiyas-ud-din abandoned Ala-ud-din's scientific system and reverted to the practice that existed before the Khalji times. His next regulation was directed towards extending the area under cultivation. He believed that the cultivator should not be driven into despair and rebellion by an excessive demand and that the surest method of increasing the revenue was "the extension of cultivation, not the enhancement of the demand." This policy led to happy results. Much waste land was reclaimed and the area under cultivation was increased. Many ruined villages were repopulated. Canals were dug for irrigation and gardens were planted.

The revenue reform was followed by an attempt to improve the means of communication. Roads were cleared and works of public utility, such as, building of forts, bridges and canals, were undertaken. To Ghiyas-ud-din belongs the credit of improving the system of communication, particularly perfecting the postal system which had existed in India from time immemorial. In his time, as well as long before it, posts were carried by runners and by horse-men who were stationed at distances of two-thirds of a mile and seven or eight miles, respectively, all over the kingdom. News travelled at the rate of one hundred miles a day (twelve hours).

Ghiyas-ud-din reformed the department of justice which had fallen into decay during the weak rule of Qutub-ud-din Mubarak and Khusrav. He prohibited torture in the recovery of the State debts. This form of punishment, however, continued to be given to thieves, to revenue defaulters or to those who embezzled State money.

Ghiyas ud-din's treatment of the Hindus was not praiseworthy. He retained some of the restrictions imposed on them by Ala-ud-din Khalji. He ordered that the Hindus should not be permitted to amass wealth. They were, therefore, left with as much fruit of their labour as was necessary for them to live in moderate comfort. We are told by Zia-ud-din Barani that if the Sultan did not over-tax the Hindus it was with a view not to compel them to desert their lands and business in despair. The lot of the vast majority of the people during his reign could not have been happy.

Ghiyas-ud-din was, in his personal life, an orthodox Sunni Musalman. He was devoted to the ordinance of his faith and was

punctilious in observing its rites. He ascended the throne as a champion of orthodox Islam. It was, therefore, natural for him to behave like a fanatic. He forbade the manufacture and sale of liquor and tried to enforce the ordinances of his religion on the Muslim section of his subjects. Perhaps he was not very much of a persecutor of other faiths; but he did indulge in temple-destruction and image-breaking during the course of his campaigns.

FOREIGN POLICY

Expedition on Warangal

Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq was a great annexationist. His foreign policy was directed towards reducing to submission those States which had renounced their allegiance to Delhi during the weak reign of Khusrav. But he would not stop short of their reconquest. He wanted to annex them and to bring them under the direct rule of Delhi. In 1321 he sent his heir-apparent, Fakhr-ud-din Muhammad Jauna, now entitled Ulugh Khan, to reduce Prataprudra Deva, the Kakatiya ruler of Warangal who had repudiated his vassalage to the Sultan. Ulugh Khan besieged Warangal and so harassed the ruler that he sued for peace. Ulugh Khan wanted unconditional surrender and, therefore, rejected the peace offer. Prataprudra Deva, thereupon, grew desperate and cut the lines of communication of the besiegers with the result that news from Delhi ceased to come. There arose rumours that Ghiyas-ud-din had died at Delhi. On the advice of some of his friends, such as Ubaid, the poet and the Shaikhzada of Damascus, the prince raised the siege and started for Delhi in order to be there in time to obtain possession of the throne. He was much harassed on the way by the ruler and the people of Telingana. The first Dakhin expedition of the prince was, therefore, a failure.

Second expedition to Warangal

Reaching Devagiri Jauna Khan learnt that the news of his father's death was false. So he travelled quickly to Delhi and apologised to his father for the mistake that he had committed. He was forgiven; but his associates and the Sultan's enemies were put to death. In 1323 the prince was again sent to Warangal. This time he arranged to see that his lines of communication remained safe so as to ensure a regular flow of news from Delhi. The prince captured

Bidar and then marched on Warangal. This time the siege was prosecuted with such vigour that Prataprudra Deva and his family and nobles fell into the hands of the victors. The raja was sent to Delhi. Telingana was occupied and was divided into districts which were allotted to Turkish nobles and officers. The capital city of Warangal was named Sultanpur and it became the capital of a province of the Sultanate of Delhi.

Raid on Utkala

While on his way back to Delhi from Telingana, prince Jauna undertook a raid into the kingdom of Utkala in Orissa (Jajnagar of Muslim writers), where he captured fifty elephants besides other valuable articles. He returned to Delhi laden with rich spoils and treasures from Telingana and Utkala.

Rebellion in Bangal

There was a dispute for the throne of Bangal between the three brothers, Ghiyas-ud-din, Shihab-ud-din and Nasir-ud-din. Ghiyas-ud-din, who was governor of East Bangal, overthrew Shihab-ud-din and occupied the throne of Lakhanauti in 1319. Their third brother, Nasir-ud-din, who, too, was eager to rule over Bangal, appealed to Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq for help. The Sultan responded and proceeded in person towards Bangal. On the way at Tirhut he was joined by Nasir-ud-din, and the Sultan despatched one of his capable officers, Zafar Khan, to Lakhanauti. Ghiyas-ud-din of Bangal was defeated and taken a prisoner. Nasir-ud-din was reinstated on the throne of West Bangal as a vassal of Delhi. East Bangal was annexed to Delhi. After these arrangements the Sultan returned with a large booty.

On his way back from Bangal Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq attacked Raja Har Singh Deva of Tirhut (Mithila) as the loyalty of this Hindu ruler was doubtful. He reduced him to submission and proceeded to Delhi by quick marches.

The Mongol invasion

In 1324, when prince Jauna Khan was absent in the Dakhin, the Mongols invaded northern India; but they were defeated. The Mongol leaders were captured and brought to Delhi. We do not hear of any other Mongol invasion during the reign of this king.

Death of Ghiyas-ud-din

While occupied in Bangal, the Sultan received disquieting news

of prince Jauna Khan's behaviour in Delhi. It is said that he was increasing the number of his followers in order to have a powerful party of his own. He had also become a disciple of Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Auliya who was on bad terms with his father and was reported to have made a prophecy that the prince would very soon become king of Delhi. Some astrologers had also prophesied that Ghiyas-ud-din would never return to Delhi. These reports enraged the Sultan who threatened Jauna Khan with his displeasure and proceeded back to Delhi by forced marches. Nizam-ud-din Auliya, who was similarly threatened, is said to have replied : "Delhi is yet far off" (*hunuz Delhi dur ast*). Prince Jauna Khan erected a wooden pavilion at Afghanpur, a village six miles to the south-east of Delhi, to accord reception to his father. It is said that "the building was so designed as to fall when touched in a certain part by the elephants ....." The prince entertained his father under the pavilion, and, when the meal was over, he requested his father to let him have a view of the elephants that he had brought from Bangal. The Sultan agreed. The elephants were brought out and paraded. As soon as they came into contact with that part of the building which had been designed to bring about its collapse, the entire pavilion fell and Ghiyas-ud-din, along with his second son, prince Mahmud Khan, was crushed. Jauna Khan is said to have purposely delayed ordering the diggers to remove the debris. When the debris were removed, the Sultan was found bent over the body of his favourite son, Mahmud Khan, as if to protect him.

Historians are divided in their opinion regarding prince Jauna Khan's complicity in the affairs. Dr. Mahdi Husain says that the pavilion fell of its own accord and that the prince had no hand in the matter. Sir Woolsely Haig and Dr. Ishwari Prasad, on the other hand, maintain that the whole thing was the result of a plot cleverly engineered by the prince. The latter view seems to be correct, as it is based on the statement of the famous African traveller, Ibn Battuta, who derived his information from Shaikh Rukn-ud-din who was present in the pavilion at that time but had been asked by prince Jauna Khan to leave for his prayers just before the elephants were brought out to be paraded before the building.

Estimate of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq

At the time of his accession, Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq was an experienced soldier and a seasoned general. He had also had the

reputation of being a loyal and faithful official and a successful warden of the marches. He was possessed of almost all the qualities a good ruler should have. He established peace and order in the kingdom and stamped out theft, robbery and brigandage. By his policy of moderation, he conciliated the old nobility and won over most of the halfhearted supporters of Khusrav. He seems to have been the first Sultan of Delhi to take a correct view of the position of the agriculturists, as he believed that the prosperity of the State depended upon the wellbeing of the tillers of the soil. That was why he issued instructions that revenue officers should do their best to extend the area under cultivation rather than to increase the rates of the land tax. He followed the middle course with regard to the hereditary official class in the department of revenue, namely, *muqaddams*, *khuts* and *chaudharis*. Hence his reign was marked by some kind of material prosperity of the people.

Tughluq Shah was careful about the administration of justice. He held his daily court twice, that is, morning and evening, and endeavoured to maintain the prestige of the Sultanate. He also believed in the policy of military domination. Some of the modern writers have called him a mild and benevolent ruler. But this is not a correct description of his character. He was mild and generous to his courtiers and former friends and colleagues for whom his elevation to the throne brought no change so far as his attitude towards them was concerned. But for the common people, particularly the Hindus, he was fairly strict. He also pursued the policy of aggressive warfare against his Hindu neighbours.

Ghiyas-ud-din paid special attention to the army. He kept the military machine in proper trim and retained Ala-ud-din's reforms, such as taking down of the descriptive rolls of the soldiers and the branding of the horses. He was a rigid Sunni Musalman and, though not bitterly hostile to the religion of the vast majority of his subjects, he was surely not sympathetic towards it.

Ghiyas-ud-din was fond of buildings. Early in his reign he laid the foundation of a big palace-fort which became known as Tughluqabad. Within the enclosure of this building were erected his palaces and other buildings. His main palace was built of gilded bricks which shone so brilliantly in the sun that none could gaze steadily upon it. Ibn Battuta relates that the Sultan had his treasure-rooms in one of which there was a cistern into which molten gold was poured so that it

became one solid mass. He was, also, a patron of learning and had scholars and poets at his court.

MUHAMMAD BIN TUGHLUQ, 1325—1351

His early career

The eldest son of a frontier governor, Fakhr-ud-din Muhammad Jauna Khan had been brought up as a soldier. Even as a boy he must have distinguished himself in this profession. From his ability as a scholar, when he was in the prime of his life, it is clear that he must have been given the best possible literary eduation in his boyhood and he must have been a precocious child. The first important office that he held was that of the master of the horse under Khusrav Shah. Fakhr-ud-din was an extremely ambitious youth who saw the possibility of his reaching the throne of Delhi. To realise this object he set foot on agitation against Khusrav, his patron, who had endeavoured to placate him; and his father, Ghazi Tughluq, seems to have acted simply on the advice and initiative of his more clever and ambitious son. His opportunities came when his father became the Sultan of Delhi in 1329. He was nominated heir-apparent and given the title of Ulugh Khan. In 1321, he undertook an expedition to Warangal which failed disastrously. Two years later, he was again sent to reduce Prataprudra Deva to submission. This time he succeeded in defeating the ruler of Warangal and bringing him a prisoner to Delhi. Early in 1325 he brought about his father's death, probably because he would not wait but wanted to anticipate the course of nature. Four years before that date he had believed in the rumours of his father's death and had almost carried out his accession. These facts show beyond doubt that he was an over-ambitious and unscrupulous youth. He believed in his ability and wisdom and thought that he would do better as a ruler than any of his predecessors.

His accession

After Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq's death in February or March, 1325, Ulugh Khan sat upon the throne under the title of Muhammad Tughluq. For forty days he remained at Tughluqabad, after which he marched in state to the city of Delhi and took his seat on the throne in the Red Palace of Balban. The capital city was well decorated for his reception. The king threw gold and silver coins among the populace. His accession was well received by the people

and there was no revolution and no opposition. People seem to have expected great things from him and he, too, seems to have been confident of doing better than the previous Sultans of Delhi.

DOMESTIC POLICY

Revenue reforms, 1326-27

Muhammad was a very diligent ruler. Soon after his accession he issued numerous ordinances for the improvement of the administration of revenue. The first ordinance was for the compilation of a register of the revenue and expenditure of the provinces of his kingdom. He directed the governors of the provinces to send to the capital all relevant records and other materials for its compilation. Summaries of income and expenditure came to Delhi from distant parts of the empire, like the Dakhin, Bangal and Gujarat, and the work proceeded smoothly. The Sultan seems to have undertaken this labour in order to introduce a uniform standard of land revenue and to see that no village remained unassessed.

Taxation in the Doab

His next measure was to increase taxation in the Doab with a view to augment his resources. Probably he wanted to raise the revenue by five to ten per cent, not by increasing the land tax but by certain other taxes. Probably these taxes were the house tax and the grazing tax. We are told by a later, though standard, authority that in order to realise these taxes the houses of the people in the rural areas were numbered and their cattle were branded. He attempted to realise the land revenue and the newly imposed taxes with rigour. Unfortunately, when the policy of additional taxation was enforced in the Doab, there occurred a famine owing to the failure of rains. The people offered resistance. The Sultan's officers continued realising the taxes. The cultivators had, therefore, to abandon their lands and take to highway robbery. Muhammad bin Tughluq made an attempt to help the cultivators by giving them loans to buy seed, bullocks, etc., and making arrangements for the digging of wells for irrigation, but the policy failed. In the first place, it was too late to have introduced the grant of loans. Secondly, as people had nothing to eat, they utilised the loans for purposes different from those for which they were intended. Thirdly, the house and grazing taxes had been unpopular since they were introduced by Ala-ud-din Khalji. As they had been allowed to fall into disuse under Ala-ud-din's suc-

cessors, their revival by Muhammad was very much resented. The Sultan got no extra revenue. In fact, even the usual revenue could not be realised from the Doab. Worst of it all, the Sultan himself became thoroughly unpopular with his subjects.

Creation of agriculture department

The next experiment of Muhammad Tughluq was the creation of the department of agriculture. It was called *Diwan-i-Kohi*. The main object of this department was to bring the uncultivated land under cultivation by giving direct financial support from the state treasury. A large tract of land, sixty miles square in area, was first chosen for this purpose. The land was cultivated and different crops in rotation were sown. The government spent over seventy lakhs on the scheme in two years' time. The land was distributed among those who were in the need of it and a large staff of officers and guards was appointed to look after it. But the experiment failed for several reasons. Firstly, the piece of land chosen for the experiment was not fertile. Secondly, the experiment was altogether new with no precedent and, therefore, required great attention from the Sultan himself which he could not give. Thirdly, three years were inadequate to yield any tangible result. Fourthly, the money earmarked for the purpose was badly spent; part of it was misappropriated by corrupt officials and a part was spent by the people on their personal needs. The experiment, which was one of the best in the history of the revenue administration in the country, had, therefore, to be abandoned.

Transfer of the capital, 1326-27

An important political experiment of Muhammad was the transfer of the capital from Delhi to Devagiri which was renamed Daultabad. Several reasons led to this fateful decision. The first was that the Sultan was anxious to have a capital which should not only be situated at a strategic place but should also be in the centre of his far-flung kingdom. Muhammad was impressed by Devagiri, and we are told by Barani that the geographical importance of the place was one of the reasons for its selection as the metropolis. As he writes : "This place held a central situation; Delhi, Gujarat, Lakhanauti, Satgaon, Sonargaon, Telang, Malabar, Dwarasamudra and Kampil were about equidistant from thence....." Secondly, Delhi was too near the north-western frontier which was constantly

threatened by Mongol raids, while the Sultan wanted the new capital to be at a safe distance from the invaders from the north-west. Thirdly, while northern India had almost been conquered and pacified, the Dakhin was a new and uneasy partner in the Sultanate. It could be effectively subdued and managed by a government that had its headquarters in southern India. Lastly, he must surely have felt that southern India was so rich and that he would be able to utilise its resources more easily and effectively by an intimate contact with it. Ibn Battuta gives another reason, namely, that Muhammad was disgusted with the citizens of Delhi who had written anonymous letters full of abuse and he undertook the transfer of the capital in order to punish them. Curiously enough, this tale has been accepted by a great historian like Woolseley Haig. It is impossible to imagine that so serious a measure could have been decided on so frivolous a ground.

Having decided the measure, Muhammad ordered the transfer of the capital and also the people of Delhi, men, women and children, to Daultabad with all their belongings. The people would not like to leave Delhi which had been endeared to them by long association; but Muhammad was bent upon taking all the inhabitants with him. Ibn Battuta tells us that he caused a search to be made and a blind man and a cripple were found in the city unwilling to leave. It is said that the cripple was put to death, while the blind man was ordered to be dragged to Daultabad with the result that only one of his legs reached the new capital. The Sultan had a look over the deserted town from his palace and was satisfied to see that there came no smoke from the chimney or the kitchen of a single house. These stories are nothing more than bazar gossip.

The Sultan made commendable arrangements for the comfort of the people during their journey from Delhi to Daultabad. It is said, temporary huts were set up along the seven hundred mile road and free food and drink were supplied. Shady trees were also said to have been planted; but these could have hardly afforded any shelter to the travellers, for they could not have grown up in such a short time. The people suffered tremendously from fatigue, privation and mental agony. Many of them died on the way and many after reaching their destination.

The scheme was a complete failure, not because the transfer of the capital was undesirable and without precendent and should

not have been undertaken, but because the Sultan failed to see that the only desirable thing to do was to shift the court. Courtiers, officers and big merchants and traders would themselves have sooner or later accompanied the court to Daultabad. It was unnecessary to order the transfer of the whole population bag and baggage. Secondly, the Sultan did not realise that people would not abandon their homes and hearth except in extreme and unavoidable circumstances. The people of Delhi, who loved their city as their ancestral abode, were no exception to this rule. Thirdly, the Muslim population of Delhi was unwilling to live in Hindu surroundings in the Dakhin. Fourthly, Delhi was, without doubt, a better place for the capital of India than Daultabad which could not have successfully controlled distant provinces like Bangal or the Panjab. Above all, it was very difficult, if not impossible, for the government to resist the Mongols and protect the north-western frontier of the country from their attacks from Daultabad. Hence Muhammad committed a twofold mistake, namely, wrong choice of the place and wrong method of bringing about the transfer.

In fairness to the Sultan, it must be added that as soon as he saw that the scheme had failed, he ordered the people to return from Daultabad to their homes in Delhi. But Daultabad now became a deserted town, while Delhi was only partially repopulated. It did not regain its former prosperity for years to come.

The introduction of token currency, 1329-30

The reign of Muhammad Tughluq is an important landmark in the history of Indian coinage. He has been called 'a prince of moneyers'. He reformed the entire system of coinage, fixed the relative values of the precious metals and issued various types of coins. Most of these coins were noted for their artistic design and execution. His most notable experiment in the field was the introduction of token currency. There were several reasons for introducing brass and copper coinage. Firstly, there was the want of precious money in the treasury which had been drained by wars and rebellions and also by costly experiments in the field of administration. Secondly, owing to famine and harsh taxation policy in the Doab, there was a considerable fall in the Sultan's revenue. Thirdly, he was anxious to augment his revenues in order to undertake the conquest of the distant provinces of India and of some foreign countries. Fourthly, Muhammad was fond of experimentation and, therefore,

wanted to open a new chapter in the history of coinage in India. Fifthly, he was encouraged by the examples of Chinese and Persian rulers before him who had introduced token currency in their countries in the thirteenth century.

With the above objects in view, Muhammad promulgated an order making copper coins the legal tender and putting these coins on par (in value) with gold and silver coins. He ordered that the people should use these coins in all transactions just like gold and silver coins; but he took no steps to make the mint the monopoly of the State. Those days, in make and design and in execution and finish, the coins turned out by the royal mint were not such that they could not be easily imitated by private persons. And as the Sultan made no arrangement for preventing the circulation of counterfeit coins, private persons began to manufacture copper coins. Barani says in right orthodox Muslim fashion that the house of every Hindu became a mint. There is no reason to believe that Musalmans resisted the temptation to which, according to Barani, the Hindus succumbed. People hoarded gold and silver coins and paid their revenues in the new ones. Foreign merchants purchased Indian commodities with the token currency in the country, but refused to accept the latter while selling foreign products. Trade came to a standstill. Business was very much hampered, and gold and silver became scarce. The result was a great confusion and the Sultan was bewildered to see his scheme crumbling down before his very eyes. He was compelled to withdraw the token currency and to order the people to take from the royal treasury gold and silver pieces in exchange for brass and copper coins. The State was, thus, defrauded, while private people made huge profits at its expense.

The failure of the scheme was due not so much to the backwardness of the people and their prejudice and ignorance (though they failed to appreciate it) as to the failure on the part of the Sultan to prevent the manufacture of counterfeit coins by private individuals and their circulation in the market. It was a mistake on the part of Muhammad to have failed to appreciate the limitation and circumstances of the age. He must be, therefore, primarily held responsible for the failure of the scheme.

Policy towards Church

With the example of Ala-ud-din before him, Muhammad ignored the *shariat* (Canon law) and "to base his political conduct on reason."

INDIA IN 1350 A.D.
Muhammad Tughluq.

Bukhara
Samarqand
TRANS-OXIANA
Tirmidh
Balkh
Qunduz
Ghur
AFGHANISTAN
Herat
Kabul
Ghazni
Kandahar
Kalat
PERSIA
MONGOLS
KASHMIR
Srinagar
CHINA
TIBET
Siahkot
Nagarkot
Kangara
Lahore
Pakpattan
Dipalpur
Saresuti
Sarhind
Samana
Multan
Abohar
Hisar
Hansi
Bhakkar
Uch
Delhi
Amaroha
Sambhal
Badaun
TIRHUT
Nagaur
Malhura
Koil
Agra
Kanauj
Siwistan
Ajmer
Bayana
Lucknow
Awadh
INDEPENDENT
Amarkot
Siwana
Jalor
Ranthambhor
Gwalior
Jaunpur
Thatta
Abu
Chittor
Kara
Kashi
KAMARUPA
Debal
Chanderi
Kalinjar
Patna
Gaya
Lakhanauti
Sylhet
Khajuraho
Allahabad
Anhilwara
Ujjain
Bhilsa
BANGAL
Sonargaon
Satgaon
Chatgaon
Cambay
(Junagarh)
Girnar
Somanath
SORATH
Dabohi
Dhar
Mandu
Asirgarh
Illichpur
Daman
Jajnagar
ORISSA
BURMA
Daulatabad
Jalna
Thana
Bombay
Ahmadnagar
Puri
To China
Poona
Chaul
Singhgarh
BAHMANI KINGDOM (1347)
Kalyani
Bidar
Golkunda
Warangal
Gulbarga
INDEPENDENT
Rajamundry
Dabhol
Raichur
Vijayanagar
(Sandabur)
Goa
VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE (1336)
Kanchi
Kampil
Dwarasamudra
Calicut
MALABAR (1335)
Tanjore
Madura
HOYASALAS
TO MALDIVE IS.
CEYLON
Colombo
ANDAMANIS.
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL

——— Boundary of the Empire
------ Territory Inherited
--- --- Route of Ibn Battuta

0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles

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He decided that in administrative and political matters secular considertions alone must prevail. This brought him into clash with the *ulema* who had all through, except during the reign of Ala-uddin, influenced the state policy. But the Sultan did not really intend to defy the *shariat*. He consulted theologians on all important matters, but accepted their advice only when it appealed to reason and expediency. He deprived the theologians of the monopoly of administration of justice. He overruled the judgment of the qazis whenever he found it defective. He appointed some non-theologians to judicial posts. Whenever the *ulema* were found guilty of rebellion, sedition or embezzlement of religious funds, the Sultan inflicted upon them severe punishments. Shaikhs and Sayyids were not immune from the rule of law. The result of the policy was that domination of the *ulema* in political and administrative affairs of the State came to an end. But this earned for the Sultan great unpopularity with Muslim divines.

Like Balban, Muhammad believed that the Sultan was the "Shadow of God". His coins bore the expression, "*Al Sultan Zilli Allah*" (Sultan, the shadow of God). Through his coins he endeavoured to convey to the people the importance of the king's majesty. On some of his coins we come across verses like : "Sovereignty is not conferred upon every man, but is placed on the elect," "He who obeys the Sultan truly obeys God," "The Sultan is the shadow of God," and "God is the supporter of the Sultan." He dropped all reference to the Khilafat, though he did not assume the title of Khalifa.

Inspite of his justice, generosity and personal ability, the Sultan found that he was getting more and more unpopular. Thinking that the disaffection of the people might be due to his ignoring the Muslim law, he reversed during the later part of his reign his policy towards the Khilafat. He implored the Khalifa of Egypt to confirm him as the Sultan of Delhi. He removed his own name from the coins and inserted that of the Khalifa. All royal orders were issued not in the name of the Sultan, but in that of the Khalifa. In 1340, the Sultan invited the beggarly descendant of the Khalifa of Egypt, named Ghiyas-ud-din Muhammad, showed him the utmost servility and respect and presented to him extremely costly gifts. But even this did not restore Muhammad's popularity, which caused him great worry; but there was no help.

Muhammad was by nature a man of liberal disposition and broad outlook on life. He was not intolerant to the religion of the vast majority of his subjects. He employed some of them on fairly important posts. The contemporary Muslim historians who have indulged in unqualified praise for the policy of religious persecution of the Hindus by Muhammad's predecessors on the throne of Delhi have no comment to make about this ruler's attitude towards his non-Muslim subjects except to blame him for his generosity.

FOREIGN POLICY

Plan for the conquest of Khurasan

Like Ala-ud-din, Muhammad Tughluq was ambitious of conquering countries beyond the borders of India. Early during his reign he formed the design of conquering Khurasan, Iran and Trans-Oxiana. The Khurasan project was due to the instigation of some Khurasani nobles who had been attracted to the Sultan's court by his lavish generosity. A huge army, numbering three lakhs and seventy thousand men, was collected and was paid one year's salary in advance. But the project could not be undertaken and the army had to be dispersed. It was found that such a huge force could not be maintained for long without unduly straining the resources of the state. It was not an easy affair to cross the huge snowbound mountains that lay between India and Khurasan and to fight the hostile people inhabiting the intervening lands. Moreover, the political condition of Khurasan had taken a turn for the better. So the project was given up.

Conquest of Nagarkot, 1337

The fort of Nagarkot situated on a hill in the Kangra district in the Panjab had defied Turkish army since the time of Mahmud of Ghazni. Inspite of the conquest of almost the whole of India by Ala-ud-din Khalji, that fort had remained in the hands of a Hindu prince. In 1337 Muhammad undertook an expedition against it. The raja offered resistance, but he had to submit and the fort was restored to him.

Qarajal expedition, 1337-38

Muhammad was desirous of establishing his authority over the Himalayan states which had not so far been reduced to submission. Hence he led an expedition to Qarajal which was situated in the

Kamaun hills at a distance of ten days' journey from Delhi. The huge Delhi army attacked the Hindu stronghold, but it suffered greatly owing to the mountainous nature of the country and heavy rainfall. The Sultan was, therefore, obliged to retire; but he succeeded in compelling the chief to pay him an indemnity. Some modern writers have described the Qarajal expedition as an unsuccessful adventure to conquer China and Western Tibet. This view is incorrect, as no contemporary authority has made any mention of Muhammad's desire to conquer China or Tibet.

Relations with China

Muhammad had cordial relations with some of the Asian countries, particularly China. The Chinese emperor, Toghan Timur, sent an envoy to Delhi in 1341 seeking Muhammad's permission to rebuild Buddhist temples in the Himalayan region. These Himalayan temples were demolished by Muhammad's soldiers during his Qarajal expedition. The Sultan sent Ibn Battuta as an envoy to the court of the Mongol emperor of China. Ibn Battuta started in July 1342, and returned in 1347. As regards the temples, Muhammad replied that according to the laws of Islam permission could not be given for their reconstruction unless *jizya* was paid.

Mongol invasions, 1328-29

The north-western frontier of the Sultanate was threatened by a series of Mongol invasions which occurred after Muhammad had ordered the transfer of his capital to Daultabad. At the head of a powerful army, the Mongol chief, named Tarma Shirin, entered the frontier and ravaged the country from Multan and Lahore to the vicinity of Delhi. The Sultan was taken by surprise. He had neglected the frontier. There was no capable warden of the marches to resist the invaders. It seems that the Mongol chief was bribed and persuaded to retire. This was a very unwise policy. It exposed the weakness of Muhammad's administration and showed that the policy of resistance followed by Balban and Ala-ud-din was given up.

Rebellions

Muhammad Tughluq's reign was disturbed by numerous rebellions. These may be divided into two categories : (a) early rebellions, and (b) later rebellions.

Early rebellions. The early rebellions were due not to the

failure of Muhammad's domestic policy, but to the ambitious designs of certain important chiefs. The first rebellion was that of the Sultan's cousin, Bha-ud-din Gursasp, governor of Sagar near Gulbarga. He was defeated in 1327 and flayed alive. The second rebellion was that of the Hindu chief of Kondhana (modern Singhgarh near Poona). He was defeated and compelled to become a vassal of Delhi. The third rebellion was that of Bahram Aiba of Multan who held, besides Multan, Uch and Sindh. He, too, was defeated and put to death.

Later rebellions. The later rebellions, which were too many, were caused by the Sultan's oppressive policy of increasing taxes and by his ruthless punishments inflicted upon the people. Certain others were due to the transfer of capital and the policy of the currency reforms which made Muhammad unpopular and instigated ambitious men to take advantages of his difficulties.

(1) In 1335 Sayyid Jalal-ud-din Ahsan rebelled in Ma'abar (the eastern coast of southern India with its capital at Madura). Although Muhammad proceeded in person to southern India, the rebel could not be put down. Ma'abar became independent.

(2) Amir Hulaju, governor of Lahore, was the next powerful notable to rebel. He was, however, defeated and killed.

(3) Malik Hushang, son of the governor of Daultabad, revolted in 1335-36, but later he submitted and was pardoned.

(4) Bangal took advantage of the unpopularity of Muhammad. The Sultan sent an army which defeated and killed Ghiyas-ud-din of Bangal (1330-31). A little later there occurred a dispute among certain powerful notables in that province. One of them, Ali Mubarak, appealed to Delhi for help, but received none. So he proclaimed himself king of Lakhanauti. That province was, thus, lost to Delhi.

(5) The next to rebel was the governor of Kara, named Nizam Ma'in. He was, however, defeated and flayed alive in 1337-38.

(6) In 1338-39 came the turn of Nasrat Khan, governor of Bidar. He was defeated, made to submit and deprived of his fief.

(7) Ali Shah rebelled at Gulbarga in 1339-40. He was defeated and banished to Ghazni.

(8) One of the most formidable rebellions was that of Ain-ul-mulk Multani, governor of Awadh. Ain-ul-muik was probably one of the topmost living nobles and officers. He had held impor-

tant offices since the time of Ala-ud-din Khalji and played a prominent part in the history of his time. He was a highly learned scholar and was well versed in theology and jurisprudence. He subsequently wrote a book, entitled *Munshat-i-Mahru* or *Insha-i-Mahru* which gives a good account of the administration of Firoz Tughluq. He was one of the few important men who could wield their sword and pen with equal facility. He was transferred by Muhammad from Awadh to Daultabad in 1340-41. Ain-ul-mulk was made to believe that his transfer was preliminary step towards his destruction. So he revolted. But he was defeated and taken a prisoner. He was dismissed from his post and subjected to indignities. But as the Sultan was convinced that he was a half-hearted rebel, he spared his life.

(9) Shahu Afghan was another rebel who killed the governor of Multan and occupied the city. Muhammad himself proceeded to punish him. Shahu fled to the hills.

(10) The next rebellion occurred in Sunam and Samana. The Sultan undertook an expedition to those places and defeated the chiefs—Jats and Bhatti Rajputs. After this success he brought to Delhi the rebel leaders and forcibly converted them to Islam.

Foundation of the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar

(11) The widespread rebellions gave an opportunity to the Hindus of southern India to make a bid for their independence. An enterprising Hindu leader, named Harihar, laid the foundation of the kingdom of Vijayanagar in 1336. He gave secret support to Krishna Nayak who rebelled against the Sultan of Delhi in 1343-44. This rebellion could not be suppressed and a large part of southern India passed into the hands of the Hindus.

(12) The people of Devagiri rebelled in 1345 owing to the extortions and harsh treatment of the local officers. The historian, Farishta, writes that the people "rebelled in all quarters and the country was devastated and depopulated in consequence."

(13) Next in importance came the rebellion of the foreign nobles, known as *Amiran-i-Sadah* (Centurians) who had enjoyed certain special privileges. These foreign nobles embezzled money, aided other rebels and took to plunder whenever there was any confusion in the Dakhin. Muhammad instructed Aziz Khummar, governor of Malwa, to punish the foreign nobles. Aziz treacherously put to death a number of them. This caused dissatisfaction among

the foreign nobles in Gujarat who, too, raised the standard of rebellion. They captured Aziz and put him to death. Muhammad had to proceed to the scene of action. He defeated the rebels near Dabohi. This success was able to put down the *Amir-i-Sadah*.

(14) The foreign nobles at Devagiri became apprehensive of their fate. They rebelled and occupied Devagiri. From there the trouble spread to Berar, Khandesh and Malwa. The Sultan had to proceed to Devagiri and to put down the rebellion. Meanwhile, there was another rebellion in Gujarat and Muhammad had to proceed there. This gave the rebels of Devagiri a chance. They repudiated allegiance to Delhi and laid the foundation of the Bahamani kingdom.

(15) The rebellion in Gujarat proved to be formidable. The Sultan, however, hunted down the rebel, named Taghi, who was compelled to take shelter at Thatta in Sindh. Muhammad remained in Gujarat for three years in order to reorganise the administration of the province and conquer Girnar, that is, modern Junagarh. After this, he proceeded to Sindh to punish Taghi, and there he was taken ill. He died on March 20, 1351. In the words of the historian, Badauni, "The king was freed from his people and they from the king."

His character and estimate

No character in our medieval history has aroused so much interest and controversy as that of Muhammad bin Tughluq. Contemporary historians, like Barani and Ibn Battuta, who came into intimate contact with him, have expressed opposite views about his personality and his virtues and faults. Modern European writers have passed diametrically opposite judgments on the character and achievements of the Sultan. Elphinstone, for example, expressed doubt "whether he was not affected by some degree of insanity." Havell, Edward Thomas and Smith have dittoed Elphinstone. Gardiner Brown, on the other hand, has painted Muhammad in bright colours and exonerated him from the charges of madness, blood-thirstiness and that of being a visionary. We have two monographs on the reign of this Sultan from the pen of two of our scholars. Yet the controversy is not stilled and the subject continues to exercise the minds of writers and thinkers as usual.

As a private gentleman, Muhammad's character leaves nothing to be desired. Endowed with a keen intellect, a marvellous memory

and an inordinate thirst for learning, he was a profound scholar of logic, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy and the physical sciences, besides Persian literature and poetry. Adept in the art of expression, composition as well as speech, he was also a noted dialectician. He loved calligraphy and fine arts, specially music, was a patron of letters and arts and loved the company of learned men.

Muhammad's personal life was marked by a high standard of morality. He was free from the prevailing vices of the age. By nature he was one of the humblest of men. Both Barani and Ibn Battuta bestow high praise on him for his generosity and tell us that the Sultan was profuse in the distribution of gifts, presents and rewards. He seems to have been an affectionate relation and a good friend as is testified by his fondness for his cousin, Firoz, and regard for Barani and other friends. Inspite of the charge of irreligiousness, it is clear from a perusal of Ibn Battuta that Muhammad had faith in morality and was devoted to his religion. He was regular and punctilious in the five daily prayers and fasts enjoined by Islam. By habit and inclination Muhammad was diligent. In fact, his application to the details of administration and his perseverance had become proverbial. He was brought up as a soldier. As an experienced general he had fought battles. Historians are unanimous in their praise for his love of military activity.

As was to be expected from a man of his profound learning and wide range of interest, Muhammad was possessed of a liberal disposition and catholicity of taste. Inspite of his devotion to Islam, he was not intolerant and was ready to appreciate merit in men of diverse faiths and positions in life.

But, when judged as a ruler and administrator, Muhammad must be pronounced a failure. In fact, his achievements, during his long reign of twenty-six years, were negative. He inherited a vast kingdom which embraced not only practically the whole of northern India but also the Dakhin. Before he closed his eyes in death, the Sultanate of Delhi was considerably reduced in size. The Dakhin was lost. Bangal severed its connection. Sindh, too, was slipping away from his grasp when death overtook him. Even in the provinces that still formed part of the Turkish kingdom, rebellion and strife were rife. His experience and reputation as a soldier and general failed him in the hour of his trial. He was out to conquer countries beyond the frontiers of India; he lost a considerable portion

of what was his at the time of his accession. Muhammad's ambition was to remodel the administration and to place the revenue administration and the currency system on a scientific basis. One of his cherished desires was to have a capital situated in the centre of his dominion. All these projects came to naught. Nay, they caused a considerable reaction and alienated the people beyond measure. Long before his death, he almost confessed his failure. "I visit them (people) with chastisement," he said to the historian Barani, "upon the suspicion or presumption of their rebellious and treacherous designs, and I punish the most trifling act of contumacy with death. This I will do until I die, or until the people act honestly, and give up rebellion and contumacy. I have no such *wazir* as will make rules to obviate my shedding blood. I punish the people because they have all at once become my enemies and opponents. I have dispensed great wealth among them, but they have not become friendly and loyal." What else could this mean except the confession of one who was conscious of his failure ?

Some modern writers are of opinion that Muhammad was not responsible for his failure as a ruler; he failed because circumstances were against him, because people were backward and prejudiced and, also, because the Muslim *ulema* turned against him for his policy of setting aside their interference in state affairs and punishing them for going against his orders. There is some point in the above contention; but Muhammad's failure was chiefly due to his limitations and to certain grave defects in his character. He lacked balance, practical judgment and commonsense. He was obsessed with theoretical learning and his knowledge was bookish and was not derived from actual experience in life. He was not endowed with the royal gift of judging human character and lacked the power of inspiring confidence in men and getting on with his colleagues. It was his hobby to propound lofty theories and visionary projects. Seldom did he care to think out his schemes in detail. They were sound on paper; but, when reduced to practice, they came to nothing. Muhammad had no patience either with men or with institutions, including his own lofty projects. By character and habit he could not persevere on, but would give up a project without seeing its end. He was, without doubt, over-hasty. Possessed of a violent temper, he would easily get annoyed. Once angry, he would lose his balance and would never attempt to see the other side of a problem. He

had no discrimination in the awarding of punishment and would inflict the penalty of death for a petty crime as well as for a heinous offence. Being sensitive, he imagined that the people were, without reason and inspite of his generosity, against him and so they must be punished. These were, therefore, the main causes of his failure. If the people were backward he should have attempted like a wise and practical statesman to take them with him in his projected reforms. What was after all the use of introducing schemes which were too ahead of the age and incomprehensible to his subjects for whose benefit they were intended ? Generally speaking, circumstances were not against him. When he ascended the throne, he was cordially welcomed by the people; but as he persisted in his wild schemes, such as, raising the taxes in the Doab in the midst of a famine, it was but natural for the people to offer resistance. It seems too much to say that he failed because of ill-luck and that he should be styled as an ill-starred monarch.

Was he mad ?

Elphinstone was the first historian who believed that Muhammad suffered from some degree of insanity. His views have been shared by later European writers. A perusal of the contemporary authorities shows that there is nothing in the pages of Barani and Ibn Battuta which might show that the Sultan ever suffered from any kind of madness. Probably, Elphinstone and other European writers were misled by the statement of Barani and Ibn Battuta that there were always some dead bodies found lying in front of the Sultan's palace. Muhammad inflicted the punishment of death for petty offences not because he was mad but because he could make no discrimination between crime and crime. The mistake was due to the lack of a sense of proportion rather than to mental insanity. It must also be said in fairness to the Sultan that punishment of death was common in the medieval age both in Europe and in Asia. It is also incorrect to say that Muhammad delighted in shedding human blood. The charge was brought against him by Barani, who belonged to the clerical party which was particularly hostile to the Sultan for his policy of depriving them of their privileges and chastising them for their failings and presumptions.

The charge of atheism is also untenable. Barani says that the Sultan had lost faith in Islam and acted against its tenets, while Ibn Battuta definitely asserts that he was very meticulous in his daily

prayers and other religious rites enjoined by Islam. Not only did he adhere strictly to the dogma, percept and practice of his religion but he punished those who deviated from them, and even those who did not say their prayers regularly. The truth was that in the early stage of his career Muhammad was assailed by doubts and, hence, he acted as a sceptic. But, some years after his accesion, he gave up scepticism and behaved like an orthodox Sunni Musalman.

There is another charge against Muhammad, namely, that of his being a visionary. There is some substance in the contention that he was fond of building castles in the air and that he thought of schemes which failed in operation. But one should not forget that many of his projects and reforms, such as the currency and revenue reforms, were, on the other hand, sound, constructive and practicable. Some of them even showed "flashes of political insight." Hence, Muhammad was both an idealist and a visionary.

Was he a mixture of opposites ?

Dr. Ishwari Prasad maintains that only when viewed superficially Muhammad appears to be an "amazing compound of contradictions," but he was really not so. Dr. Mahdi Husain endeavours to show that though he had contradictory qualities in him, these appeared at different periods of his career and that there were clear reasons behind them. Hence, Dr. Husain contends that he could not be called a mixture of opposites. The present writer differs from the above learned historians and believes that Muhammad did possess contradictory qualities at one and the same period of his career and that these remained part and parcel of his character throughout his life. Dr. Mahdi Husain has shown that the Sultan was sceptic in the early days of his reign, but became really religious in his later years. This would show that so far as religion was concerned, the Sultan could not be called guilty of being religious and irreligious at one and the same time. But Dr. Husain is silent so far as the other qualities are concerned. Muhammad was humble and, at the same time, extremely arrogant, so that, as Barani writes, he would not like to be told that there was any part of the world or heaven which was not under his control. At times, he was so moderate and servile that Ibn Battuta considered humility to be the most important trait of his character. Usually, he was extremely generous; but, at times, he was thoroughly narrowminded. Ibn

Battuta has given a number of examples of Muhammad's great reverence for abstract justice and form of law. These show that he would, at times, appear as a suppliant in a court of justice, would behave like an ordinary citizen and receive punishment from the hands of his judge; on the other hand, he would, normally, inflict barbarous punishments of death and mutilation for the most petty offences. Usually, he was all kindness; but at times, when his wrath was excited, he would behave like a most cruel man and a great tyrant. Hence one cannot escape the conclusion that Muhammad bin Tughluq was a mixture of opposites.

FIROZ TUGHLUQ, 1351—1388

His early life

Firoz was born in 1309. He was the son of Rajjab who was the younger brother of Sultan Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq. His mother was a Bhatti Rajput and a daughter of Ran Mal, a petty chieftain of Abohar in the modern district of Hissar in the East Panjab. The marriage was a forced one. It is said that Ghazi Tughluq, when governor of Dipalpur, heard of the beauty and charm of this Rajput girl and pressed Ran Mal to give her away in marriage to his younger brother. But the proud Rajput spurned the proposal. Ghazi Malik, therefore, used coercion and reduced Ran Mal and his people to great hardship. The girl told her father that if by giving her away the family saved itself from inevitable destruction she would have no objection to the proposed marriage. Firoz was the offspring of this union. When he grew up, Firoz was trained in the art of administration and warfare; but he does not seem to have distinguished himself in either. Muhammad Tughluq had affection for his cousin and associated him with the administration of the kingdom. It is said that he intended Firoz to be his successor.

His accession

Firoz was present in the royal camp at Thatta when Muhammad breathed his last on 20th March, 1351. The royal army, being very greatly harassed by the enemy, Taghi, and the Mongol mercenaries who had been employed by Muhammad as auxiliaries, found itself in great confusion and decided to select a leader lest it should be lost in difficulties. As Muḥammad had wished Firoz to succeed him, all eyes turned towards the latter. There was, however,

a small section in favour of the minor son of the Sultan's sister, that pressed this boy's claim on the ground of his more being closely related to Muhammad than Firoz. But the nobles replied that they wanted a grown-up man who should be able to lead them out of the difficulties. They urged Firoz to accept the crown. He, being a man of retiring disposition and religious bent of mind, rejected the offer. The nobles, the *shaikhs* and the *ulema*, thereupon, combined to bring pressure upon him. He yielded to their importunities. His coronation took place in the camp near Thatta on 23rd March, 1351.

The new king restored order in the army, saved it from the enemy and set out for Delhi. Hardly had he quitted Sindh when information was received that Khwaja-i-Jahan, deputy of the late Sultan, had proclaimed at Delhi a boy as the son and successor of Muhammad bin Tughluq and carried out his enthronement. When the army reached Multan, Firoz held consultations with his nobles and the Muslim jurists. The nobles refused to admit the existence of any son of the late Sultan. The jurists pronounced their opinion that Khwaja-i-Jahan's candidate, being a minor, was not qualified to be the Sultan of Delhi. As in Muslim law sovereignty is not considered to be a matter of 'inherited right', it was unnecessary to consider whether the boy had any right to the throne from the legal standpoint. Moreover, the time required a powerful man at the helm of affairs. The cause of Khwaja-i-Jahan's nominee was doomed; so the minister submitted and was pardoned in view of his loyal service in the past. He was allowed to go to his fief of Samana; but was put to death by a follower of Sher Khan, governor of Sunam and Samana, probably at the instigation of the nobles and officers of the army. Firoz now became the undisputed sovereign of a large kingdom.

Firoz's accession has been a subject of controversy among the scholars. Sir Woolseley Haig is of opinion that the boy raised to the throne by Khwaja-i-Jahan was not 'a supposititious son' but an issue of his body. According to him, Firoz's succession was, therefore, irregular and he may be called a usurper. Other historians differ from this view and maintain that there is no record or proof to show that the boy was Muhammad's own son. Even if the child were Muhammad's own son, Firoz's succession was not irregular. According to Islamic law sovereignty is not the monopoly of any particular individual or a class of men. It belongs to one who is competent

to occupy the throne. In other words, there is nothing like 'inherited right' of succession to a Muslim throne. Though it must be admitted that in the Sultanate the succession of a son had come to receive some kind of recognition, yet competence and the will of the electors, that is, chief nobles and theologians, and, sometimes, nomination by the dying monarch were the decisive factors in the choice of a successor. Firoz was duly elected, he was pronounced competent and, according to Barani, he was nominated heir by Muhammad. Thus he fulfilled all important conditions. Hence, he cannot be called usurper; nor can it be maintained that his accession was irregular. Dr. Ram Prasad Tripathi says that Firoz's accession revived the principle of election which "had been gradually receding in the background without, however, denying the right of the son to rule. The case also emphasised fitness against merely close relationship to the sovereign." Moreover, it enunciated two new principles, namely, that it did not matter if a ruler was born of a mother who had been a non-Muslim before her marriage, and that it was not necessary that he should be a distinguished soldier. For these reasons Firoz's accession "is as important as it is interesting."

DOMESTIC POLICY

Administration

Towards the end of August, 1351, Firoz entered the capital without opposition. He appointed Malik-i-Maqbul his prime minister and gave him the title of Khan-i-Jahan. The new prime minister was a Brahman from Telingana and had recently become a convert to Islam. He was a very able administrator and his adhesion proved to be a great asset. Firoz's first task was to conciliate his subjects by remitting all debts due to the government and by "abstaining from any endeavour to recover the treasure which had been lavished by Khwaja-i-Jahan in his attempt to establish his nominee." The Sultan was lucky in enjoying the confidence and support of the people of Delhi, particularly of the orthodox Sunni section of its population. He was able, with public support, to effect some improvements in the administration of law and order and to give security to the people which had been sadly lacking owing to disturbances during the last years of Muhammad's reign. Firoz looked upon himself as trustee of the state and responsible for the welfare of the people. He reasserted the principles of the theocratic system of government and

considered himself to be the real sovereign of the Muslim section of his subjects for whose moral and material welfare he did all that was possible in that age. He tried to approximate to the ideal of a true Islamic monarch. Firoz, therefore, lived and worked in a dual capacity, that is, temporal ruler of all the people living in his dominions and temporal and spiritual (religious) ruler of his Muslim subjects. He succeeded in giving a certain measure of material prosperity to the people and in raising the importance of orthodox Islam.

The second task before the new Sultan was that of "raising the Delhi Sultanate from the state of decrepitude and demoralisation into which it had fallen since the closing years of his predecessor's reign." This was not possible without spectacular military achievement and without recovering the lost provinces of the kingdom, namely, the Dakhin, Bangal, Sindh and Rajasthan. Firoz, who lacked military ability of a high order and power of domination, shuddered from the thought of recovering the Dakhin and Rajasthan. He made a half-hearted attempt, and without success, to bring Bangal and Sindh back under the control of Delhi. He made little or no attempt to increase the power and prestige of the crown. He was essentially a man of peace. His main work was directed to improving the economic lot of the people. He introduced no administrative reforms as such (except those in the revenue department); but made the administration work smoothly during his long reign. He appointed capable ministers, entrusted the work of government to them and gave them his confidence and support. This was the secret of his success as a ruler.

The revenue policy

Firoz paid great attention to the revenue affairs of his kingdom. He found the financial and the revenue administration in a chaotic condition. The people had suffered greatly from extortion, maladministration and famine. To heal the wounds and restore confidence he wrote off the *taqavi* loans that had been advanced to the people by the late Sultan. He increased the salaries of the officers and abolished the use of physical coercion to which governors and revenue officers were subjected when they came to the court to render accounts of the income and expenditure of their jurisdictions. The most important task was that of preparing a statement of the probable income of the state. He had a rough estimate made of the

public revenues of the kingdom. This task was entrusted to an experienced revenue officer, named Khwaja Hisam-ud-din. As the result of six years' hard work, during which he made a tour of the provinces and examined revenue records, the Khwaja fixed the revenue of the *khalsa* land in the kingdom at six crore and eighty-five lakh *tankas*. These figures, which remained unchanged, represented Firoz's annual income from the land revenue of the territory directly under the state administration throughout his reign. The estimate was not made on the basis of the measurement of land and the ascertainment on the actual produce of the soil. It was the result of guess or speculation, reinforced by local information and the past experience of the revenue department. He abandoned the more scientific method of fixing the state demand by measurement of land. Inspite of this basic defect, the fixing of the land revenue of the Sultanate on more or less a permanent basis was a great achievement for which Firoz deserves credit.

The Sultan abolished as many as twenty-four vexatious taxes, including the much hated grazing and house taxes. He lowered the State demand as far as land revenue was _concerned. He further lightened the cultivator's burden by putting an end to the pernicious custom of imposing benevolences on the governors at the time of their appointment, and also annually, which really used to fall upon the shoulders of the people. In conformity with the Quranic law, Firoz charged only four taxes, namely, *kharaj*, *khams*, *jizya* and *zakat*. *Kharaj* was the land tax; *khams* meant one-fifth of the booty captured during war. Ala-ud-din and Muhammad Tughluq used to appropriate four-fifth of the booty, leaving only one-fifth to the army. But Firoz followed the Islamic custom of taking one-fifth and leaving four-fifth to the soldiery. Firoz was quite strict in realising *jizya* from the non-Muslims. He even extended its scope by charging it from the Brahmans who had either been exempt from this tax or had managed to evade it. *Zakat* was a $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent tax on property realised from the Muslims and was spent on certain specific religious purposes only. In addition to these four taxes, the Sultan later on added, with the approval of the *ulema*, irrigation tax levied on those cultivators who made use of the waters of the State canals for irrigating their fields. Its rate was one-tenth of the produce of the irrigated area. Officers and revenue collectors were warned not to charge more than the prescribed dues. Those who violated these

instructions were punished. Revenue officers and collectors were paid liberally by grants of land, and also allowances, so that they might not harass the cultivators.

The Sultan took steps to make internal trade free by abolishing a number of duties that had greatly hampered the circulation of merchandise and retarded commercial prosperity. This wise measure revived the already dwindling trade.

The great interest that Firoz paid to revenue administration brought him considerable income. His enhanced revenues were due to (1) improved quality of cultivation and superior crops, (2) water tax, and (3) gardens. Firoz was very fond of gardens. He laid out 1,200 fruit gardens in the neighbourhood of Delhi which yielded an annual revenue of one lakh and eighty thousand tankas and enabled him to solve the problem of food shortage in Delhi.

The result of the above measures was extension of cultivation, progress of trade, general prosperity of the people and increase in the revenue of the State. Grain, cloth and other necessities of life became very cheap. We are told by contemporary writers that no village lay waste and no land fit for cultivation remained untilled. This seems to be an exaggeration; but there is no doubt that cultivators toiled hard and their fields produced much more than they had done for many years in the past. Shams-i-Siraj Afif sums up the effect of Firoz's beneficial revenue reforms in these words: "Their (people) homes were replete with grain, property, horses and furniture; everyone had plenty of gold and silver; no woman was without her ornaments and no house without good beds and *divans*. Wealth abounded and comforts were general. The State did not suffer from financial bankruptcy during this reign. The revenues of the Doab amounted to eighty lakhs of tankas and those of the territories of Delhi to six crores and eighty-five lakhs of tankas."

Firoz's revenue policy was marred by three main defects. The first was the extension of the farming system which had been in existence throughout the period. Both Ala-ud-din and Muhammad bin Tughluq had discouraged it and preferred direct management. Firoz, on the other hand, gave great impetus to this system. The work of revenue collection was given to the highest bidders who tried to extort as much from the cultivators as they could. The second defect was his *jagir* system. Both Ala-ud-din and Muhammad Tughluq were against the grant of *jagirs* to military and civil officers.

Firoz, however, made it a rule to pay his military commanders, and even soldiers and civil officers, by assigning land to them. The assignment deeds were sold at a discount to professional revenue collectors with the result that the state suffered, the people were harassed and the assignees also got less than their legitimate share of the revenue of the assigned land. The third defect was the extension of the scope and rigours of collection of the *jizya*. Being a religious tax and a charge from the non-Muslims, it was already very unpopular. But, as Firoz was religiously inclined, he rigorously collected this tax. To him it was an anomaly that the Brahmans, who were the 'citadel of infidelity', should be free from it. So he imposed this tax upon the Brahmans for the first time in the history of the Sultanate.

Irrigation

Another measure undertaken by the Sultan for the encouragement of agriculture was the introduction of a series of canals for irrigational purposes. Five such canals were constructed at the Sultan's orders. The most important of them was the canal which carried the waters of the Yamuna to the city of Hissar. It was 150 miles long. The second canal, 96 miles long, ran from the Satlaj to the Ghaghara. The third started from the neighbourhood of Mandavi and Sirmaur hills and connected it with Hansi. The fourth ran from the Ghaghara to the newly established town of Firozabad and the fifth ran from the Yamuna to Firozabad. The remains of some of these canals are seen to this day. Firoz sunk 150 wells, both for irrigation and for the use of travellers.

A large area of land covering over 160 miles was served by two of the biggest canals. In the Doab alone there sprung up 52 colonies. In the area watered by the canals, superior crops, such as, wheat, sugarcane, lentils, etc., were grown. Fruits were also cultivated.

Public works

Firoz was a great builder of works of public utility. He is said to have founded 300 towns which cannot be true unless we include in this the number of villages that had decayed or disappeared but were repopulated as a result of the Sultan's kindly policy of encouraging agriculture. The important towns of Firozabad (the Kotla Firoz Shah in Delhi), Fatehabad, Hissar, Jaunpur and Firozpur

(near Badaun) were founded by him. He built "four mosques, thirty palaces, two hundred caravan-sarais, five reservoirs, five hospitals, a hundred tombs, ten baths, ten monumental tombs, and a hundred bridges." He had two of Asoka's pillars brought to Delhi; one from Khizrabad and the other from near Meerut. Besides, he laid out many gardens. As has already been given, he laid out 1,200 gardens in the vicinity of Delhi which produced so much fruit that it brought to the treasury an annual income of one lakh and eighty thousand tankas.

Justice and other humanitarian measures

Firoz was guided by the Islamic law in the administration of justice. There was a chief qazi at the capital and several subordinate qazis in the provinces and in important towns in his dominions. According to the Islamic practice, the *mufti* expounded the law while the qazi delivered the judgment. The Sultan abolished torture which was commonly practised as a means of ascertaining the truth. But, as Firoz was kind-hearted, sometimes he imposed very mild punishment on criminals. Some culprits got no punishment at all. The result of his elemency was, on the whole, not very wholesome.

Firoz introduced some benevolent measures for the welfare of the people. He established an employment bureau and placed an officer in charge of it. The names of unemployed persons were registered in this office and they were given suitable appointments according to their qualifications and fitness. He established a charity bureau which was called *Diwan-i-Khairat*. The department gave pecuniary help for the marriage of Muslim girls and for the benefit of widows and orphans. The Sultan established a charitable hospital, *Dar-ul-Shafa*, which was placed under the charge of skilful physicians. Patients were supplied free medicines and diet.

Promotion of learning

Firoz was greatly interested in learning. He was a patron of scholars and granted them liberal subsistence allowances. He established many schools, colleges and monasteries, placed these institutions in charge of learned men and endowed them handsomely. There was an educational institution attached to each mosque. The Sultan was specially fond of history. Zia-ud-din Barani and Shams-i-Siraj Afif wrote their works under his patronage. Two other important works of history, namely, *Fatwah-i-Jahandari* by

Barani and *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi*, were written during his reign. The Sultan wrote his autobiography which is entitled *Faluhat-i-Firozshahi*. He was interested in medicine also. After the conquest of Kangara a great library containing Sanskrit works fell into his hands. Firoz caused some of the Sanskrit works to be translated into Persian. One of these was given by him the name of *Dalayal-i-Firozshahi*. Firoz's personal interest and the state patronage of learning encouraged the study of theology, jurisprudence and other branches of Islamic learning. It must, however, be confessed that the outlook of most of the scholars of the time was rather narrow and vitiated by religious fanaticism.

Religious policy

Firoz Tughluq was elevated to the throne by prominent nobles and the *ulema*. By temperament and training, too, he was attracted towards religion. Moreover, as he was born of a lady who had been Hindu at least in her early life, the Sultan must have thought it necessary to show that he was no less a Musalman than those who were born of parents of pure Turkish lineage. For these reasons, he followed the policy of restoring the prestige and power of the *ulema*. Unlike Ala-ud-din and Muhammad Tughluq, he consulted Muslim divines and accepted their advice even in political and secular matters. Owing to this policy the separation between the church and the state and the conflict between the Sultan and the clerical order of the previous reign came to an end. As the *ulema* were orthodox Muslims with narrow and cramped outlook on life, their interference in state affairs produced injurious results. Under their influence, Firoz behaved as a true Islamic monarch and considered it to be his duty to stand forth as a champion of 'the faith' and to repress Hinduism and put down idolatry. The Sultan himself writes in his autobiography that he encouraged his subjects to embrace Islam by various methods. He exempted those Hindus from *jizya* who became converts to this religion. He encouraged conversion by giving jagirs, rewards in cash, titles and honours and state employment. He demolished temples and broke their images to pieces, and ordered a Brahman to be put to death on the charge that he was seducing Muslims to give up their religion.

The Sultan was very intolerant towards the Shias and other non-Sunni Musalmans who were considered to be heretics by orthodox Sunnis. The Shias were punished and their religious books were

publicly burnt, the Mulhids were similarly persecuted, and so also the Mahdwis. Even the Sufis were not spared.

Such a ruler was bound to entertain great regard for the nominal Khalifa of Egypt. From him he twice received the investiture and robes of honour as Sultan. For the first time in the history of the Sultanate of Delhi, Firoz described himself as the deputy of the Khalifa. The Khalifa's name was included in the coins and was read in the *khutba* along with that of the Sultan.

The slave system

The slave system received great impetus during the reign of Firoz who was very fond of them. He issued standing instructions to his governors and other officers to send him slaves from all parts of the kingdom. These slaves numbered about one lakh and eighty thousand out of whom forty thousand were enlisted for service in the Sultan's palace. They were placed under a separate officer with a regular staff of subordinates and clerks. A large sum of money was earmarked for the expenditure of this department. Most of the slaves were posted in various provinces. Firoz made a good arrangement for their education and employment; but the system became very pernicious. Like the *ulema*, the slaves interfered with the administration. The slave system became an important cause of the disintegration of the Sultanate of Delhi.

Army

The army was organised on a feudal basis. The standing army established up Ala-ud-din Khalji seems to have gone into disuse and its place taken up by contingents of troops furnished by nobles and provincial governments, though, of course, the old bodyguards remained as before. The troops were generally paid by grants of land. A small number of irregulars were paid direct from the royal treasury. A majority of the armymen were paid by transferable assignments on the revenue. The assignments were purchased at Delhi by a professional class at one-third of their value. These were sold to the soldiers in the districts at one-half. This practice led to great abuse and the army discipline suffered considerably. The second defect was due to the rule that when a soldier became old, his son or son-in-law or even slave could succeed him. Service in the army, thus, became hereditary and considerations of merit and fitness were thrown to the winds. Thirdly, leaving aside a small

section of eighty or ninety thousand cavalry, which remained at the capital, the rest of the army consisted of quotas supplied by the nobles. This part of the army could not be properly controlled by the central government, as the recruitment, promotion and discipline of the troops was in the hands of the nobles and not in that of the army minister. The military establishment became weak and ceased to be a great instrument of force.

FOREIGN POLICY

Firoz's foreign policy was marked by vacillation and weakness. He made no attempt to recover the Dakhin that had torn itself off from the Sultanate and had become absolutely independent during the later years of Muhammad bin Tughluq's reign. When pressed by his advisers to reduce the Bahamani kingdom, he evaded it on the plea that he was altogether against shedding the blood of the Muslims. Though he had no such scruples in regard to Rajasthan, he showed no desire to bring Mewar, Marwar and other states back under the suzerainty of Delhi. His feeble attempts to reduce Bengal failed ignominiously. In fact, his expeditions revealed the lack of military talent on his part and brought little or no gain to the Sultanate.

Bangal

Bangal had asserted its independence as early as 1338. By 1352 Haji Iliyas, who styled himself as Shams-ud-din Iliyas Shah, had brought the whole of that province under his rule. Next, he invaded Tirhut with the object of conquering the south-eastern part of the Delhi Sultanate. Such an aggression could not be tolerated even by Firoz who invaded Bangal in 1353 with 70,000 horse and a large number of foot soldiers. Iliyas, abandoning his capital, Pandua, fled to Ikadala which Firoz failed to subdue. Fearing the approach of the rainy season, the Sultan gave up the campaign and began his return march to Delhi. Iliyas attacked him on the way but was defeated, and the Delhi army returned safely to the capital.

In 1359 Firoz again invaded Bangal on the pretext of helping Zafar Khan, a son-in-law of a previous Sultan of East Bangal, to vindicate his claim to that province. Iliyas's successor, Sikandar, like his father, fled to Ikadala and Firoz had to recognise his independence and return to Delhi without achieving his object.

Expedition to Puri

On his way back from Bangal Firoz halted for sometime at Jaunpur from where he marched against Jajnagar (modern Orissa). His objective was the famous Jagannath temple of Puri. The Raja of Jajnagar fled. The fanatical Sultan desecrated the temple and threw the idol into the sea. The Raja offered his submission and agreed to send twenty elephants as tribute, whereupon Firoz returned to Delhi.

Conquest of Nagarkot

In 1360 the Sultan led an expedition to Nagarkot in Kangara which had passed out of the control of Delhi during the closing years of Muhammad bin Tughluq's reign. The Raja submitted after six months' siege and was honourably received. Among the booty acquired were 1,300 Sanskrit manuscripts some of which were translated into Persian on the Sultan's orders.

Conquest of Sindh

In 1361-62 Firoz invaded Sindh at the head of 90,000 horse, numerous infantry and 480 elephants, besides many boats. The ruler, Jam Babaniya, opposed him with an equally powerful force. The Delhi army suffered greatly in the contest and Firoz was obliged to retreat to Gujarat for reinforcement. But he was misled by the guides into the Ran of Kutch from where he emerged after six months, during which period great anxiety was felt at Delhi on account of the absence of news about the Sultan and his army. In 1363 Firoz reattacked Thatta with the help of an additional army sent from Delhi by his prime minister, Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul. The Jam agreed to pay a tribute, whereupon the Sultan returned to his capital.

The country was remarkably free from Mongol invasions during Firoz's reign. Only two Mongol raids are said to have taken place. They were, however, repelled without difficulty.

Suppression of rebellions

During the early years of his reign an unsuccessful plot was formed against the Sultan's life by his cousin, Khudavandzada, the sister of Muhammad bin Tughluq. His later years, also, were disturbed by a few rebellions. The first rebellion occurred in Gujarat. There the new governor, Damaghani, raised the standard of rebellion as he could not collect the huge sum for which the

revenues of the province had been farmed out to him. He was, however, defeated and killed and his head was sent to the court. The second rebellion occurred in Etawah in 1377 where revenue could hardly be collected except at the point of the bayonet. This, too, was suppressed. The third took place in Katehar where the Raja, Kharku, put two Sayyids to death. Firoz, anxious to punish the crime, marched to Katehar in 1380. He ordered a general massacre of the people. Kharku fled into the hills of Kamaun and the Sultan's wrath fell upon the people of the province. Under the Sultan's orders the Delhi army perpetrated great cruelty. Thousands of innocent people were slain and 23,000 were taken prisoners and converted into slaves. He appointed an Afghan governor of the province and, during the next five years, visited it annually to supplement the Afghan's bloody work. The result was that, in the words of the historian, "the spirits of the murdered Sayyids themselves arose to intercede."

Last days and death

The later years of Firoz's life were clouded by sorrow and misery. The death in July 1374, of his eldest son, Fateh Khan, whom he had nominated his heir-apparent, administered a severe blow to him. He was already very old and, owing to the grief, his power and judgment began to fail him. He now nominated his second son, Zafar Khan, his successor; but he, too, died. The Sultan's choice now fell on his third son, Muhammad Khan; but he was not formally appointed heir. Power now passed into the hands of the prime minister, Khan-i-Jahan, the son of the great Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul who had died sometime before. The prime minister fomented trouble and persuaded Firoz to believe that the prince was conspiring with Zafar Khan and other nobles to seize the throne for himself. The deluded Sultan authorised Khan-i-Jahan to punish the prince's partisans. Zafar was consequently arrested and imprisoned in the prime minister's house. But prince Muhammad managed to enter the royal apartments in the disguise of a woman, threw himself at his father's feet and explained to him that Khan-i-Jahan was a traitor and intended to pave his own way to the throne by bringing about the destruction of the royal family. Firoz permitted the prince to punish Khan-i-Jahan, whose house was now besieged. But Khan-i-Jahan managed to flee by a back door to Mewat where he took shelter. Prince Muhammad was now associated with the adminis-

tration and was allowed to share the royal title. He was formally declared heir-apparent in August 1387. The prince had Khan-i-Jahan killed. He then appropriated all power in the State; but, instead of looking after public business, he devoted himself to pleasure. The administrative machinery became lax and there was confusion. Some of the royal nobles tried to rouse Muhammad to sense of responsibility, but without success. Being disappointed, they organised a rebellion against his authority. Muhammad was obliged to fight. He was on the verge of victory when the nobles brought the Sultan into the field. The appearance of Firoz at the head of the army brought about a debacle. Muhammad was defeated and fled for his life. Firoz now appointed his grandson, Ghiyasuddin Tughluq Shah, son of the deceased Fateh Khan, as his heir and conferred upon him the royal title. The old Sultan died on September 20, 1388, aged about eighty.

Personality and character

Historians hold different views about the personality and character of Firoz Tughluq. Contemporary writers, such as, Barani and Shams-i-Siraj Afif, praise him as the most just, merciful and benevolent ruler since the time of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud. Henry Elliot, the editor of *History of India as told by its own Historians*, and Elphinstone, author of *History of India*, have described Firoz as Akbar of the Sultanate period. Dr. V.A. Smith differs emphatically and says that it is absurd to compare Firoz with Akbar. Dr. Ishwari Prasad maintains that "Firoz had not even a hundredth part of the genius of that great-hearted and broad-minded monarch who preached from the high platform of public interest the gospel of peace, goodwill and toleration towards all sects and creeds." Sir Woolseley Haig's considered opinion is that "the reign of Firoz closes the most brilliant epoch of Muslim rule in India before the reign of Akbar." The truth lies between these extremes.

There are no two opinions about the fact that Firoz possessed qualities of the heart, though not of the head. He was honest and sincere in his convictions and professions, and he really wished the welfare of his people. No Sultan of Delhi before or after him did so much for the material prosperity of his subjects. His revenue policy fostered agricultural prosperity and gave comfort and happiness to the vast majority of the people. He did whatever was possible in that age to free the trade and commerce which resulted in cheapening

the prices of things. Dr. R. P. Tripathi rightly observes: "The masses judge a ruler by the material prosperity that they can see and feel....." It is no wonder, therefore, that Firoz has won golden opinion from historians, both contemporary and modern.

The Sultan's numerous acts of charity added to his popularity. The employment bureau, the charity department, the state endowed schools and colleges, subsistence allowances and stipends to scholars and holy men, the comfort and convenience given to travellers and his mild and generous treatment towards State employees—all combined to contribute to a feeling that the Sultan was the real trustee of the people's welfare. Measures like the above had not been undertaken by any previous Turkish ruler. That they were sorely needed after the great sufferings and harassment of Muhammad bin Tughluq's reign hardly needs emphasising. Hitherto the activity of the ruler was confined to making fresh conquests, to the maintenance of law and order and collection of revenue. Firoz widened the sphere of State activity in the interests of his subjects. He must get credit for it.

But there is the other side of his character which is disappointing to those who believe in military exploits and in the prestige of the monarch. Far from being a military genius, Firoz was not even a seasoned soldier or a successful commander. He was timorous and his expeditions brought him little prestige and no gain. Secondly, sometimes his generosity and benevolence were indiscriminate and, as such, injurious to the interests of order and discipline without which no administration can ever be successful. In fact, Firoz was sometimes over-lenient which marred the efficiency of administration and stood in the way of proper enforcement of the reforms which he himself had devised. Many instances of Firoz's misplaced generosity are on record in the pages of his court historians. It is said that once he gave a gold *tanka* to a trooper to bribe the clerks of the military department who would not pass an unfit horse at a military review without illegal gratification. At another time, he connived at the fraud committed by his mint master who deliberately allowed an undue proportion of alloy in the coins in order to misappropriate a large sum of money. He was aware that the transferable assignment deeds given to the soldiers in lieu of their salaries were sold at one half of their face value and yet he did not take any steps against the malpractices. Similar other instances of the Sultan's injurious

leniency can be multiplied; but the above are enough to show that interested persons took undue advantage of his mildness. Thirdly, he organised his army on a feudal basis which impaired its discipline and solidarity as a fighting force. Fourthly, his fondness for slaves, whose number rose to one lakh and eighty thousand, led to undue interference in the work of administration and caused great embarrassment to honest officers. Fifthly, Firoz's religious policy, which was based on the principle of active interference with the religious beliefs and practices of the overwhelmingly vast majority of his subjects, was ill-advised, unjust and injurious. Under him, for the first time in the history of the Sultanate, the State became a proselytising agency. He did everything to convert Hindus to Islam. "I encouraged," says Firoz in his autobiography, "my infidel subjects to embrace the religion of the Prohphet, and I proclaimed that every one who repeated the creed and became a Musalman should be exempt from *jizya* or poll tax. Information of this came to the ears of the people at large, and great numbers of Hindus presented themselves and were admitted to the honour of Islam." Such a policy was bound to alienate the people's sympathy. He restored the *ulema* to their former place of ascendancy. Although it made him popular with them, the policy eventually proved injurious to the best interests of the Sultanate. Firoz won the good opinion of orthodox Sunni public by subscribing to their narrow fanatical views. This, too, in the long run, sapped the foundation of his kingdom. Dr. Tripathi is right when he says : "The irony of history reflects itself in the unfortunate fact that the very qualities that had contributed to the popularity of Firoz were also largely responsible for the weakness of the Sultanate of Delhi."

Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul

The credit for whatever success was achieved by Firoz Tughluq goes mostly to his prime minister, Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul. He was originally a Brahman of Telingana and was in the service of the raja of the place. After the conquest and annexation of the kingdom, Maqbul turned a Muslim. He was employed by Muhammad bin Tughluq and was given the fief of Multan. When Firoz became king, Maqbul was raised to the exalted post of the prime minister. He was illiterate, yet a very talented politician. Firoz reposed confidence in Khan-i-Jahan and left him in charge of the capital whenever he had to go on a distant expedition. The prime minister

managed the affairs of the government so efficiently that nothing went wrong during the absence of the king. Like most well placed men in that age, Khan-i-Jahan was addicted to sensual pleasures. His *harem* is said to have comprised two thousand women of different nationalities and he had many children from them. He died in 1370 at a ripe old age. He was succeeded in the office of prime minister by his son, Jauna Shah, who was given his father's title of Khan-i-Jahan.

LATER TUGHLUQS, 1388—1414

On Firoz's death in September 1388, the throne of Delhi passed to his grandson, Tughluq Shah, son of Fateh Khan, who assumed the title of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq II. He was an inexperienced and pleasure-loving youth. His conduct gave offence to his *maliks* and *amirs* who deposed him and placed Abu Bakr, son of Zafar Khan, on the throne on February 19, 1389. But prince Muhammad, who had acted as Firoz's deputy and had been driven out of the capital by a party of nobles, asserted his claim to the throne. With the help of certain powerful officials he proclaimed himself king at Samana on 24th April, 1389. Then followed a contest between the two rival monarchs as the result of which Abu Bakr was forced to quit the throne in 1390. But Muhammad, too, could not rule for long. Owing to intemperance and excessive indulgence, his health was greatly impaired and he died in January 1394. He was succeeded by Humayun, entitled Ala-ud-din Sikander Shah who died on March 8, 1395. Then came to the throne Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, the youngest son of Muhammad. This prince was destined to be the last ruler of the Tughluq dynasty. His claim to sovereignty was disputed by Nasrat Shah, a son of Fateh Khan, the eldest son of Firoz. For some time there were, thus, two kings ruling at one and the same time—one at Delhi and the other at Firozabad. They lived and quarrelled, as the historian Badauni says, like the kings of the game of chess.

All the later rulers of the Tughluq dynasty who followed Firoz were utterly incompetent men without any ability or strength of character. All of them were puppets in the hands of their ambitious and unscrupulous nobles who intrigued hard to further their own personal interests to the neglect of those of the state. This led to civil wars among the rival claimants to the throne of the kingdom.

The Sultanate of Delhi began to disintegrate. Muslim governors and Hindu chiefs everywhere threw off their allegiance and became *de facto* sovereigns in their own principalities. The vast kingdom built up by the valour, ability and labours of the successive monarchs from Qutub-ud-din to Muhammad bin Tughluq fell to pieces. Malik Sarvar, a eunuch who enjoyed the title of Sultan-ush-Sharq (Ruler of the East), became independent at Jaunpur and laid the foundation of the Sharqi dynasty. Gujarat under Zafar Khan, who had once been its governor, cut off its connection with Delhi. Malwa and Khandesh became independent states. The Khokhars in the north-eastern Panjab, who had never been effectively subjugated, rose in rebellion. The chiefs of Rajasthan made no pretence of showing deference to the Sultan of Delhi, and Gwalior became an independent state. The Hindus of the Doab who hardly paid revenues, except at the point of the bayonet even in the good old days of Muhammad and Firoz, tried to shake off their slavery. Bayana became a new Muslim state. Kalpi also followed suit. The extinction of the kingdom became only a question of time. The death blow was dealt by the terrible invasion of Timur in 1398.

Invasion of Timur, 1398-99

Amir Timur was born in 1336 at Kech in Trans-Oxiana. His father, Amir Turghay, was the chief of the Gurgan or Chagtai branch of the Barlas Turks. Timur ascended the throne of Samarqand in 1369 when he was thirty-three years old. Being an extremely ambitious and enterprising prince, he undertook aggressive conquests of Persia, Afghanistan and Mesopotamia. These successes whetted his appetite for further conquests. The fabulous wealth of Hindustan attracted his attention. The Delhi Sultanate was fast tottering and afforded an opportunity to the Turkish conqueror to help himself at its expense. But, being a clever diplomat, he pretended that his main object in undertaking an expedition to India was to put down idolatry which was tolerated by the Sultans of Delhi. He had no desire whatever of conquering Hindustan and ruling over it either directly or indirectly.

Timur sent the advance guard of his army under his grandson, Pir Muhammad, who besieged and captured Multan early in 1398. He himself started from Samarqand in April 1398, with a very powerful force and, crossing the Indus, the Jhelam and the Ravi, besieged Talamba, seventy-five miles to the north-east of Multan, in October.

After plundering the town and massacring its inhabitants, he reached the vicinity of Delhi in the first week of December 1398, travelling *via* Pak Patan, Dipalpur, Bhatner, Sirsa and Kaithal, plundering and burning the country and massacring the people on the way. On his approach Sultan Nasir-ud-din Mahmud Tughluq and his prime minister, Mallu Iqbal, made an attempt to oppose him. Before fighting the Tughluq army, Timur, who wanted to get rid of the embarrassing presence of the prisoners he had made on his way to Delhi, butchered one lakh of Hindu captives in cold blood. Then he fought and defeated Mahmud on 17th December, 1398. The Indian army consisted of ten thousand cavalry, forty thousand infantry and one hundred and twenty elephants, and yet it easily fell before the onslaught of the invading force. Sultan Mahmud fled to Gujarat and Mallu Iqbal to Bulandshahr.

Timur occupied Delhi on 18th December, 1398. The citizens of the capital, headed by the *ulema*, waited on the conqueror and begged quarter. Timur agreed to spare the citizens; but, owing to the oppressive conduct of the soldiers of the invading force, the people of the city were obliged to offer resistance. Timur now ordered a general plunder and massacre which lasted for several days. Thousands of the citizens of Delhi were murdered and thousands were made prisoners. A historian writes : "High towers were built with the heads of the Hindus, and their bodies became the food of ravenous beasts and birds.....such of the inhabitants who escaped alive were made prisoners." The conqueror acquired immense riches. Every soldier in his army became rich overnight and "there was none so humble but he had at least twenty slaves." Timur picked up the best artisans of Delhi and sent them to Samarqand to build for him the famous Friday Mosque.

The conqueror remained at Delhi for fifteen days. He had no desire to stay in India and to rule over it. He quitted Delhi on January 1, 1399, on a return march to Samarqand. Passing through Firozabad (Delhi), he reached Meerut which he stormed on 19th January, 1399. He had to engage and defeat two Hindu armies near Hardwar. He then proceeded along the Sivalik Hills to Kangara, plundering and sacking that town and Jammu—everywhere the inhabitants being slaughtered like cattle. Before quitting the borders of our country, the conqueror appointed Khizr Khan, who had been expelled by a rival (Sarang Khan) from the governorship of Multan,

to the government of Multan, Lahore and Dipalpur. He crossed back the Indus on 19th March, 1399 "after inflicting on India more misery than had ever before been inflicted by any conqueror in a single campaign."

Condition of Hindustan after Timur's departure

Timur left our country prostrate and bleeding. There was utter confusion and misery throughout northern India. Our north-western provinces, including northern tracts of Rajasthan and Delhi, were so thoroughly ravaged, plundered and even burnt that it took these parts many years, indeed, to recover their prosperity. Lakhs of men, and in some cases, many women and children, too, were butchered in cold blood. The *rabi* crops standing in the fields were completely destroyed for many miles on both the sides of the invader's long and double route from the Indus to Delhi and back. Stores of grain were looted or destroyed. Trade, commerce and other signs of material prosperity disappeared. The city of Delhi was depopulated and ruined. It was without a master or a caretaker. There was scarcity and virulent famine in the capital and its suburbs. This was followed by a pestilence caused by the pollution of the air and water by thousands of uncared-for dead bodies. In the words of the historian Badauni, "those of the inhabitants who were left died (of famines and pestilence), while for two months not a bird moved wing in Delhi."

The Sultanate of Delhi, which had already been broken up into fragments before Timur' invasion, was now shrunk to the dimensions of a petty principality comprising the capital city and a few districts around it. For about three months the kingdom had no king, as the rival monarchs, Mahmud Shah and Nasrat Shah, had fled to save their skin from the invader's fury. In March 1399, Nasrat Shah, who had been driven out of the capital by his rival, Muhmud, returned to Delhi; but Mallu Iqbal, Mahmud's prime minister, who soon followed him, again expelled him. In 1401 he invited Mahmud back to Delhi and kept him a puppet in his hands. Mallu struggled hard, but unsuccessfully, to re-establish control over some of the neighbouring provinces and was slain in a battle with Khizr Khan of Multan in 1405. Mahmud who was thus freed from the galling tutelage of this dictator, failed to consolidate his authority and died in February 1413. With his death came to an end the Tughluq dynasty founded by Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq in 1320.

The nobles now chose of their number, named Daulat Khan, who refrained from assuming royal dignity. He was not likely to succeed in restoring order and reducing the rebellious provinces to submission where Firoz Tughluq's immediate successors, who had the prestige of crowned monarchs, had failed. In March 1414, Daulat Khan was besieged in Delhi by Khizr Khan of Multan and after a few months' opposition was compelled to surrender. He was sent a prisoner to Hissar. Khizr Khan became ruler of Delhi on May 28, 1414, and laid the foundation of the so-called Sayyid dynasty.

The history of the other independent kingdoms after Timur's departure need not be given in detail. It has already been mentioned that Khwaja Jahan, entitled Malik-ush-Sharq, ruled as an independent monarch at Jaunpur. That newly established kingdom included Jaunpur, a part of Bihar, the whole of Awadh and the territory as far as Kanauj. After the invader had left, the ruler of Jaunpur indulged in aggressive warfare with Delhi in order to bring it under his control. Bangal had become independent since the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq. Firoz's two expeditions had failed to bring that province back to allegiance. Gujarat, which was a few years before a province of the Sultanate, was now a full-fledged kingdom under Muzaffar Shah. Malwa, too, owned no master. Its ruler, Dilawar Khan, did not assume royal title; but in actual practice he wielded royal authority. The Panjab, Multan and Sindh were in the hands of Khizr Khan, who was appointed governor of these provinces by Timur on his behalf. The province of Samana had turned into a small kingdom under Ghalib Khan. Bayana, near Bharatpur, was ruled by Shams Khan Auhadi. Kalpi and Mahoba were under the sway of Muhammad Khan. The fertile region of the Doab between the Ganga and the Yamuna was in revolt. Gwalior had become a kingdom under a Hindu raja. The territory of Mewat, comprising the districts of Gurgaon, Alwar and Bharatpur, owned no master; sometimes it was in possession of one prince and sometimes in that of another. In southern India, the great kingdom of Vijayanagar, which had been established during the later years of Muhammad bin Tughluq's reign, enjoyed an absolute independent status. Another Hindu state was founded in Telingana. Then there was the famous Bahamani kingdom. Khandesh, too, severed its connection with Delhi and became a

separate state. Thus, Timur completed the dissolution of the Sultanate of Delhi which had begun to disintegrate from the later years of Muhammad Tughluq's reign.

Causes of the fall of the Tughluq dynasty

When Muhammad bin Tughluq became king the Sultanate of Delhi embraced almost the whole of the sub-continent of India, except Orissa, Assam, Nepal and Kashmir; but during the reign of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, the last ruler of the dynasty, it dwindled to a small principality, the extent and prestige of which could be judged from a contemporary saying which runs thus : "The rule of the Lord of the World extends from Delhi to Palam." (Palam is the present aerodrome town, about seven miles from Delhi.) And, as we have seen, even this diminutive kingdom passed out of the hands of the Tughluq ruling family in 1413.

There were several causes of the decline and fall of the Tughluq kingdom. In the first place, Muhammad Tughluq's character and policy were greatly responsible for the shrinkage of his dominions. Owing to his visionary projects, excessively harsh punishments and wild schemes of conquests, many a provincial governor felt that his safety lay in rebellion and independence. In consequence of this feeling, the Bahamani and the Vijayanagar kingdoms came into existence in the Dakhin. Bangal cut itself off. Sindh was almost lost. In those provinces that yet remained parts of the Sultanate there was great dissatisfaction and discontentment. Secondly, although Firoz Tughluq tried to heal the wounds inflicted by his predecessor, his policy of leniency, religious intolerance, revival of feudalism, and imparing the discipline and efficiency of the army, undermined the royal authority and weakened the administration beyond repair. Thirdly, Firoz Tughluq had lived too long. Two of his elder sons, who could have managed the affairs of the state successfully, pre-deceased him. Moreover, the old Sultan did not make proper arrangement for the education of his successors, with the result that there was no member of the Tughluq family left who could have given promise of a successful reign. Fourthly, the government of the Tughluqs, like that of the previous Sultans of Delhi, was a centralised despotism which could function well only if the ruler at the helm of affairs happened to be a man of ability and strength of character. If, on the other hand, the ruler was weak, his weakness was bound to be reflected in all branches of administration. The later rulers of the

INDIA IN 1400 A.D.
Later Tughluqs.

TRANSOXIANA
Tashkent
Andijan
Bukhara
Samarqand
Kech
BADAKHSHAN
Qunduz
Balkh
Ghur
AFGHANISTAN
Herat
Kabul
KHAIBAR PASS
SWAT
Peshawar
KASHMIR
Skardo
Baltistan
Srinagar
Ghazni
Bannu
Kandahar
Kalat
PERSIA
CHINA
TIBET
Jammu
Sialkot
Kangara
Talamba
Lahore
Dipalpur
Multan
Uch
Pakpattan
Bhatner
Sarasuti
Abohar
Samana
Sirsa
Sunam
Hisar
Hansi
Delhi
Meerut
Bulandshahr
Badaun
Agra
Shamsabad
Kanauj
JAUNPUR (1375)
TIRHUT
Awadh
Jaunpur
Banaras
Etawa
Gwalior
Kalpi
Chanderi
Mahoba
Kalinjar
Khajuraho
Patna
Gaya
Hajo
Gauhati
KAMARUPA
LaKhanauti
BANGAL (1345)
Nadia
Sonargaon
Chatgaon
BURMA
Jajnagar
Puri
ORISSA
GONDWANA
Garhmandal
Jaisalmer
Nagaur
Mathura
Sehwan
Merta
Ajmer
Bayana
RAJASTHAN
Jalor
Ranthambhor
Thatta
Amarkot
Abu
Chittor
RANof KUTCH
Anhilwara
GUJARAT (1411)
Cambay
MALWA (1399)
Ujjain
Bhilsa
Dhar
Mandu
SORATH
Somanath
Diu
Daman
KHANDESH
Asirgarh
Kharla
Ilichpur
Daulatabad
Thana
Bombay
Chaul
Ahamadnagar
Poona
BAHMANI KINGDOM
Kalyani
Bidar
Warangal
Golkunda
TELINGANA
Rajamundry
Dabhol
Bijapur
Gulbarga
Raichur
Mudgal
Goa
Vijayanagar
VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE
Bezwada
Kanchi
Kampil
Sringapattam
Dwarasamudra
Calicut
Trichinapoly
Tanjore
Madura
CEYLON
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL
ANDAMANIS.

Boundary of the Empire.
Independent Provincial Boundaries.
Route of Timur.

0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles

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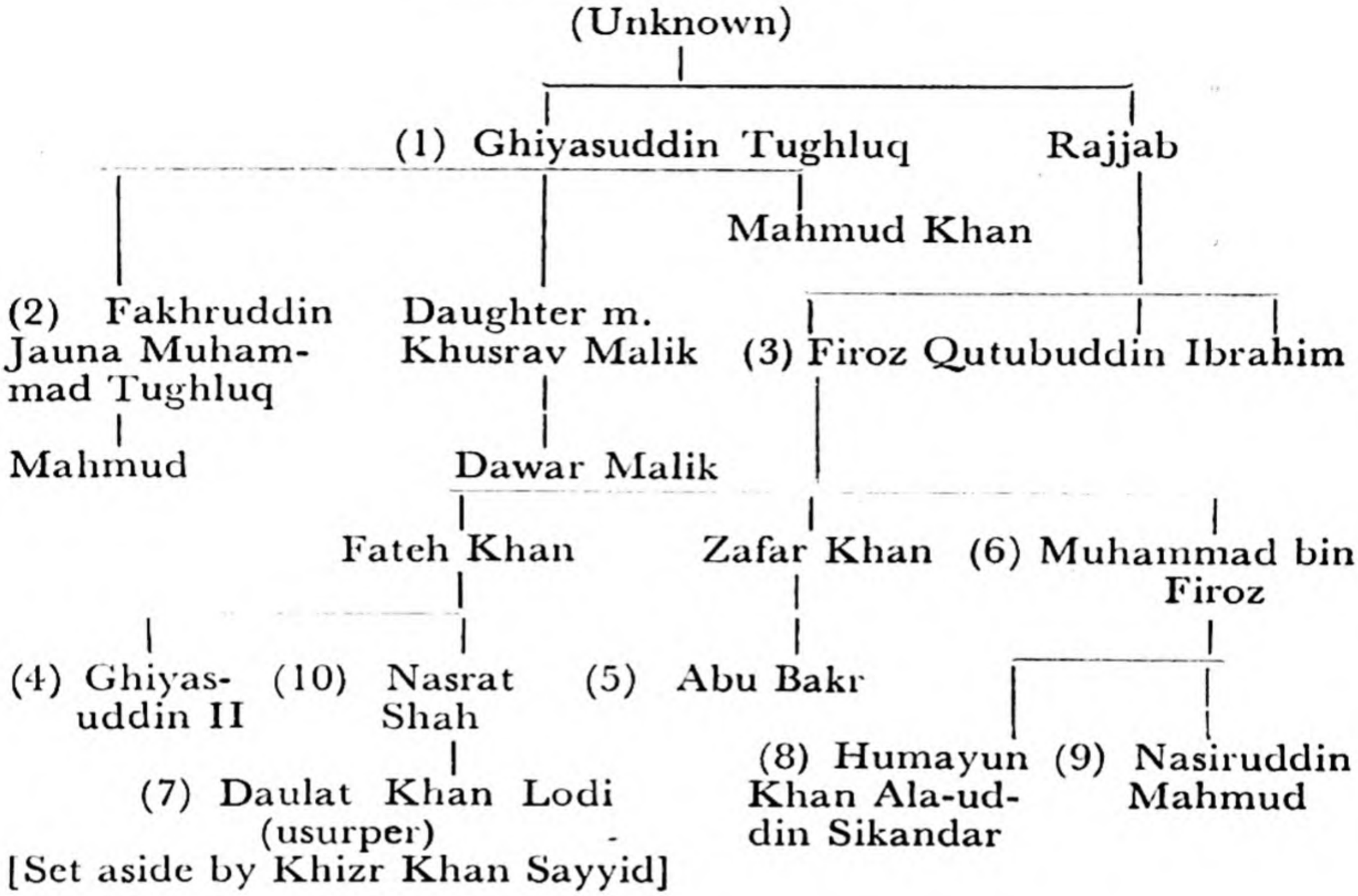
Tughluq dynasty were incompetent, non-entities who were absorbed in pleasure and could not help falling tools into the hands of their powerful nobles. None of them had enough political insight and wisdom to choose the right sort of man for his prime minister and give him his full confidence and support. In the absence of this guiding factor, rival factions sprang up at the court, which led to civil wars. Fifthly, the nobles at the court were as demoralised as their ruler himself, with the result that a man of first-rate ability among the peers became a rare commodity. The slave system, in the early days of the Turkish rule in India, had tended to produce great men; but under Firoz this system deteriorated so rapidly that among the ranks of his slaves and those of his successors there was no Qutub-ud-din Aibak, no Iltutmish and no Balban. Sixthly, the Sultanate of Delhi was based on the force and efficiency of its military organisation. Under Muhammad, and much more under Firoz and his successors, the Delhi army ceased to be an instrument of force. It could not, therefore, hold the people in awe of the royal authority. Seventhly, the government was a police government concerning itself only with the maintenance of law and order and collection of revenues; and when it could not discharge these two duties satisfactorily, it lost reason for its existence. Eighthly, the Dakhin, which had for the first time been conquered in the time of Ala-ud-din Khalji, was yet an uneasy partner in the Sultanate of Delhi. It could be held only by a man of genius like the Khalji conqueror. Under weak rulers there were numerous rebellions in the Dakhin and the severance of its connection with Delhi caused unhealthy repercussions in northern India. And finally, the Hindus, though subjected to the foreign rule for about two hundred years in the north and over a hundred years in the south, had not given up their attempt to make a bid for their freedom. Certain parts even in northern India could never really be effectively subjugated by the Turks. It took more than a hundred and fifty years for Ranthambhor to be finally conquered and annexed. The Doab, though situated very near Delhi, could never really be made submissive. Taking advantage of the weakness of the Tughluqs, Rajasthan became independent. Gwalior and other principalities threw off their yoke. Under the cumulative effect of the above factors, it would have been surprising if the Sultanate of Delhi under the Tughluqs had survived longer than it actually did.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE

The Tughluq Dynasty



15

THE SAYYID DYNASTY

KHIZR KHAN, 1414—1421

Khizr Khan was the first and the ablest ruler of the so-called Sayyid dynasty. His claim to be a descendant of Prophet Muhammad was dubious and rested on the recognition of Shaikh Jalal-ud-din of Bukhara. It seems, however, certain that his ancestors had come from Arabia. Khizr Khan did not assume the title of king, but contented himself with that of *Rayat-i-Ala*. He pretended to act as the viceroy of Shah Rukh, the fourth son and successor of Timur, to whom he is said to have sent the yearly tribute. While he ordered the *khutba* to be read in the name of the Mongol king, his coins continued to bear the name of his Tughluq predecessors. With his accession, the Panjab, Multan and Sindh again became parts of the Sultanate. The extent of the kingdom was now practically doubled.

Khizr Khan's reign was not marked by any striking success. He made an attempt to recover Etawah, Katehar, Kanauj, Patiali and Kampil, but did not achieve much success. Almost every year he would undertake an expedition for plunder and realisation of revenue and would return with certain amount of booty. The revenue of the districts of the kingdom could not be realised without the help of troops. His minister, Taj-ul-mulk, co-operated with him in putting down disorder, but his efforts were not attended with conspicuous success. There grew up a rivalry between Delhi and Gujarat and Delhi and Jaunpur; and the rulers of these two newly established kingdoms tried to conquer and annex Delhi. In the Panjab an impostor, who gave himself out to be Sarang Khan, appeared near Hoshiarpur. The Khokhar chief, Jasrath, gave great trouble in the north-eastern Panjab. Bahadur Nahir of Mewar raised his head. The chiefs in the Doab continued in rebellion and would not pay the revenue except at the point of the bayonet. Khizr Khan struggled hard against these chronic rebellions. He

could not treat his disloyal vassals as rebels and try to crush them completely. His policy was to compel the chiefs and vassals to pay a part of the revenue due from them and to extract a promise to pay the remaining next year. But this promise was almost invariably broken as soon as his back was turned. Having been worn out by these troubles and disorders, Khizr Khan died on May 20, 1421. According to Farishta, he was a just and generous ruler; but he lacked that ability, strength and character which were sorely needed in a king of Delhi at that critical juncture in our history.

MUBARAK SHAH, 1421—1434

While on death bed, Khizr Khan nominated his son, Mubarak Khan, as his heir. The new king sat on the throne of Delhi and assumed the title of Mubarak Shah. The nobles acclaimed him as their ruler, but he could not really get adequate support from them. Like his father, he had to undertake only punitive expeditions to the different parts of his kingdom in order to put down rebels and suppress disorder. Mubarak Shah succeeded in suppressing a rebellion at Bhatinda and also in the Doab; but the Khokhars of the Salt Range could not be punished. Their leader, Jasrath, was an ambitious chief who aspired for the throne of Delhi. Mubarak made little attempt to recover any of the lost provinces of the kingdom. His reign is notable for the fact that for the first time we come across one or two important Hindu nobles at the court of Delhi. Some of the Muslim and Hindu nobles under the leadership of Sarwar-ul-mulk, who was the wazir of the kingdom, hatched a conspiracy against the Sultan. When Mubarak was supervising the construction of a town on the bank of the Yamuna, the plotters fell on him and put him to death on February 19, 1434.

We have a fairly detailed account of the reign of Mubarak Shah and his predecessors in a Persian work entitled *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi*. This chronicle was compiled by Yahiya bin Ahmad Sarhindi during the reign of this ruler.

MUHAMMAD SHAH, 1434—1445

On the death of Mubarak Shah the nobles of Delhi elevated Muhammad to the throne. He was a grandson of Khizr Khan and the heir-designate of Mubarak Shah. The wazir, Sarwar-ul-mulk, anxious to keep power in his own hands, appropriated the royal treasures, the stores and the elephants and kept them in his possession.

He persuaded the new king to grant him the title of Khan-i-Jahan. He filled the high offices of the State with his own nominees and supporters. Important fiefs, such as, Bayana, Amroha, Narnaul, Kuhram and some of the parganas in the Doab were assigned to Siddhipala and his friends and followers who had played a prominent part in the assassination of Mubarak Shah. Other followers of the perfidious wazir were similarly rewarded. There was, however, one noble, named Kamal-ul-mulk, who was loyal to Khizr Khan's house and was secretly nursing a grievance against the murderers of Mubarak, whom he wanted to punish. He secretly raised a party of his followers which consisted of old maliks and amirs who were dissatisfied with the wazir for his policy of associating Hindu nobles with the administration of the court. These discontented peers besieged the wazir in the fort of Siri. The new king became a privy to the conspiracy and lent support to Kamal-ul-mulk and his party. On the other hand, Sarwar-ul-mulk wanted to lay hands on the Sultan. The Sultan, however, forestalled their designs and ordered an attack on the wazir and his followers when they came to the court. Kamal-ud-din came up with his followers in time and put Sarwar-ul-mulk and his followers to death. He was now appointed minister and he distributed offices among his friends and supporters. But Kamal-ul-mulk was not likely to succeed, as he had no powerful army at his back. Rebellions continued as before. Ibrahim Sharqi of Jaunpur invaded the eastern parts of the Sultanate and seized a number of its parganas. Mahmud Khalji of Malwa also raided the vicinity of Delhi in order to invade it; but he was obliged to return to his capital, Mandu, on the receipt of the news that his capital was threatened by Ahmad Shah of Gujarat. Moreover, he was nervous to hear that Bahlol Lodi, the governor of Lahore and Sarhind, was coming to reinforce the Delhi army. Bahlol arrived in time and chased the retreating Malwa army and captured its baggage. For this timely service Bahlol was given the title of Khan-i-Khana, and Muhammad called the Lodi chief affectionately his 'son'.

Unfortunately, another important factor emerged in the politics of Delhi at this time. Bahlol Lodi entertained the ambition of seizing the throne of Delhi for himself. He was encouraged in this ambition by Jasrath Khokhar, who had his own axe to grind. To achieve this object, Bahlol began collecting a large army of the Afghans. He invaded Delhi with a large force, but failed to capture the capital

city. The fall of the dynasty, however, was only a question of time. Everywhere there was insubordination. Revenues did not come forth and, at the top of this, the formidable governor in the kingdom, namely, Bahlol Lodi, was hungrily awaiting the opportunity of striking a fatal blow at it. At this critical time Muhammad died in 1445. He had proved weaker than his predecessors.

ALA-UD-DIN ALAM SHAH, 1445—1450

The maliks and amirs now placed Muhammad's son on the throne under the title of Ala-ud-din Alam Shah. The new king was even more incompetent than his father. Bahlol Lodi tried his best to take the fullest advantage of the weakness of the Delhi government. Fortunately for him there was a quarrel between the new king and his wazir, Hamid Khan, whom the Sultan wanted to kill. Hamid Khan, therefore, invited Bahlol to the capital, thinking that the Afghan chief would act as a tool in his hands and allow him to conduct the administration as before. But Bahlol was not the man to share power with anybody. He seized Delhi by a *coup* and put Hamid Khan out of his way. Ala-ud-din Alam Shah, who was a mean spirited ruler, resigned the whole kingdom to Bahlol and betook to Badaun. Bahlol removed Alam Shah's name from the *khutba* and the coins and proclaimed himself king of Delhi on April 19, 1451. Ala-ud-din continued to live as a private nobleman at Badaun where he died a few years later.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE

The Sayyid Dynasty

Malik Sulaiman
|
(1) Khizr Khan Sayyid
|
(2) Muizuddin Mubarak Shah — Farid
|
(3) Muhammad Shah
|
(4) Alauddin Alam Shah
|
Bahlol Lodi (usurper)

16

THE LODI DYNASTY

BAHLOL LODI, 1451—1489

His early life

Bahlol Lodi, the founder of the first Pathan state of Delhi, belonged to the Sahu Khail section of the Lodi clan, an important sub-division of the Ghilzai tribe of Afghanistan. His grandfather, Malik Bahram, had migrated to Multan during the time of Firoz Tughluq and taken service under Malik Mardan Daulat, governor of that province. He had five sons, two of whom, namely, Malik Sultan Shah and Malik Kala, attained some fame. Bahlol was the son of Malik Kala who had vanquished Jasrath Khokhar and set himself up as an independent chief. Bahlol's uncle, Sultan Shah, was appointed governor of Sarhind by Khizr Khan in 1419 and was given the title of Islam Khan. He succeeded in uniting the Afghans of the Panjab under his leadership. Before his death he nominated Bahlol as his successor in preference to his own son, Qutub Khan. On his death Bahlol became the governor of Sarhind. He was allowed to add Lahore to his charge. Being a clever and ambitious officer, he increased the number of his troops and soon became one of the front-rank governors in the Sayyid kingdom. He hastened to the assistance of his master, Muhammad Shah, who was threatened by Mahmud Khalji of Malwa. In reward for this service Bahlol was given the title of Khan-i-Khana. But the Afghan leader was not content with the position of a mere provincial governor. His ambition was to seize the throne of Delhi. His opportunity came when Ala-ud-din Alam Shah quarrelled with his minister, Hamid Khan, and attempted to take his life. The infuriated minister invited Bahlol to Delhi to take charge of the royal army. The king had already betaken himself to Badaun. The power at the court now passed into the hands of the Lodi chief.

His accession

Being an aspirant to full-fledged sovereignty, Bahlol would not

share power with the wazir, Hamid Khan. But the direction of affairs was in the hands of the old minister and it was dangerous to pick an open quarrel with him. The cunning Afghan had, therefore, recourse to stratagem to satisfy his lust for power. He advised his followers, who were cent percent Afghans, to behave like simpletons in the presence of Hamid Khan. Bahlol, too, showed studied courtesy and obsequious servility to the Khan. He made him believe that he had no ambition and was satisfied with the command of the army. These professions and the simpletion-like conduct of the Afghan troops duped Hamid Khan who permitted Bahlol and his followers daily access to the audience hall. One day Bahlol, accompanied by his men, went to pay his respects to the wazir. In the course of the audience, Bahlol's cousin, Qutub Khan, took out chains and putting them round the prime minister's hands said that it was necessary in the interests of the State that he should take rest for some time. Hamid Khan was shocked and asked the reason for such treacherous behaviour. Qutub Khan replied that the Afghans had no faith in him, as he had been disloyal to his former master. After having imprisoned the wazir, Bahlol wrote to Ala-ud-din Alam Shah to return to Delhi. But the timid Sayyid monarch, who was afraid of jeopardising his life at Delhi, declined the offer by replying that his father had called Bahlol 'son' and he was, therefore, like his elder brother. Bahlol liked nothing better. In fact, the offer to Ala-ud-din was not sincere. He now carried out his enthronement on April 19, 1451 and had his name proclaimed in the *khutba*.

Domestic policy

Bahlol was a shrewd politician who clearly realised his limitations. As his power almost exclusively depended upon his Afghan followers, he took steps to keep them satisfied. He behaved as if he were one of the Afghan peers. He did not take his seat on the throne, but sat on the carpet in front of it which he allowed to be shared by his nobles. In order further to strengthen his position, he tried to win the confidence of the army by generous gifts and rewards. He invited the Afghans from his original homeland and allotted large tracts of land in Jagir to them. He held out promise of promotion to the leading members of his tribe.

Anxious to set his house in order and reduce to submission those of the nobles and governors who did not recognise his authority, Bahlol decided to follow a strict policy of militarism. He undertook a

series of expeditions to the neighbouring districts in order to overawe the rebel governors into submission. First, he proceeded against Ahmad Khan Mewati who ruled over the huge territory known as Mewat, consisting of the modern Gurgaon district, the present district of Alwar and part of Bharatpur and Agra districts. Ahmad Khan was frightened and submitted. The Sultan deprived him of seven of his parganas which were annexed to Delhi. The next expedition was directed against Dariya Khan of Sambhal. To him, too, the Sultan showed indulgence inspite of his past conduct. Dariya Khan submitted and was deprived of seven of his parganas. Next, Bahlol settled his scores with Isa Khan of Koil (modern Aligarh) who was allowed to retain his possessions. Mubarak Khan, the governor of Sakit, and Raja Pratap Singh of Mainpuri and Bhogaon, were similarly confirmed in their possessions. His next expedition was directed against Qutub Khan, son of Husain Khan Afghan, who offered resistance. He was, however, compelled to acknowledge the suzerainty of Delhi and pay his obeisance to the Sultan. Accordingly, he was allowed to remain in possession of Rewari. Bahlol had to face some difficulty in the collection of revenue from the Doab, but eventually he succeeded in settling Etawah, Chandawar and other districts of that region. There was some trouble in Multan and Sarhind which, too, was overcome. Thus, by his policy of firmness, the Sultan succeeded in restoring order and discipline in the small kingdom of Delhi.

Foreign policy

Ahmad Yadgar, the author of the *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afghana*, maintains that Bahlol undertook the conquest of Chittor and reduced the Rana to submisson. This seems to be improbable, for in between Mewar and Delhi lay the territory of some independent chiefs who were not subdued by the Lodi monarch. Moreover, Ahmad Yadgar is not supported by other reliable authorities. Being a practical politician, Bahlol had realised the impossibility of recovering the lost provinces of the old Sultanate of Delhi. He had, therefore, refrained from undertaking aggressive expeditions against his powerful neighbours who were once vassals of Firoz Tughluq.

He was, however, anxious to reduce the kingdom of Jaunpur to submission and to annex it to Delhi. For this policy of Bahlol the ruler of Jaunpur was primarily to blame. Mahmud Shah of the Sharqi dynasty had married a daughter of Sultan Ala-ud-din, the

last king of the Sayyid dynasty. This proud lady, anxious to avenge her father, urged her husband to attack Delhi and drive Bahlol out of the imperial city. Moreover, Mahmud was invited by some disaffected nobles of Bahlol's court. In view of these reasons Sultan Mahmud Sharqi invaded Delhi at the head of a powerful force consisting of one lakh and seventy thousand horses and one thousand four hundred elephants. Bahlol, who was absent on an expedition to Sarhind, quickly returned to his capital on the news of the invader's approach. On the way, he was opposed by a detachment of the Sharqi army under Fateh Khan. As the armies came face to face, Bahlol's causin, Qutub Khan Lodi, persuaded Dariya Khan Lodi, who was a commander of the Sharqi army, to desert Mahmud and not fight against his own kinsmen. Dariya Khan acted according to this advice which considerably reduced Fateh Khan's strength. Fateh Khan was defeated and killed. Mahmud Sharqi was obliged to abandon his project and to withdraw to Jaunpur. This was only the first of a series of wars between Delhi and Jaunpur. A little later, Mahmud Sharqi was again goaded by his queen to seize Delhi. So he proceeded towards Etawah. Bahlol sent an army to obstruct his progress. Eventually, a peace was made by which the parties agreed that both the rulers should retain possession of the territories that had belonged to their predecessors and that Bahlol should restore the Jaunpur elephants captured during the last war. Mahmud promised to dismiss Jauna Shah from his service. The treaty was not respected by the contracting parties. The ruler of Jaunpur resisted Bahlol's attempt to take possession of Shamsabad which was given to him according to the treaty. Hence a fresh clash became inevitable. In the course of the war Qutub Khan Lodi was taken prisoner. But, as Mahmud Shah died the next day, a peace was again made with Jaunpur. The restoration of Qutub Khan was not included in the articles of the treaty. So it became necessary for Bahlol to undertake a fresh expedition against Jaunpur during the course of which he captured Jalal Khan, a member of the Sharqi ruling family. Meanwhile, there occurred a revolution at Jaunpur which gave the throne of that kingdom to Husain Shah. There was now a four years' peace between the parties, and Qutub Khan and Jalal Khan were released. Soon after, however, the peace was broken, as Husain Shah invaded Delhi and defeated the Afghan army at Chandawar. He annexed Etawah

and was joined by Ahmad Khan Mewati and Isa Khan of Bayana who were vassals of Bahlol. At this time Bahlol was away on an expedition to Multan. The disquieting news from Delhi compelled him to return quickly to his capital and make a peace with Husain Shah. Very soon after this, Husain Shah again invaded Delhi and captured some territory near Badaun. He gained some initial success; but in view of the resistance by the Delhi army, he was obliged to agree to a peace. The river Ganga was fixed as the boundary between the two states. While the Jaunpur army was retreating after the agreement, Bahlol treacherously attacked it and captured its baggage and treasure. Husain's queen, Malka-i-Jahan, fell into his hands. He was chivalrous enough to treat her with respect, and sent her back to Jaunpur. There was, again, an agreement which was this time violated by Husain. But he was defeated and compelled to take shelter with the raja of Gwalior. With reinforcements from Gwalior he again proceeded towards Delhi, but Bahlol inflicted upon him a series of defeats.

These successes emboldened Bahlol to march upon Jaunpur. Husain opposed him and a prolonged conflict, lasting for several years, followed. Eventually, Husain was beaten and Bahlol annexed his kingdom and placed his son, Barbak Shah, on its throne. This was Bahlol's greatest achievement. The success against Husain Shah brought great prestige to him and enabled him to compel the chiefs of Kalpi, Dholpur, Bari and Alipur to acknowledge his suzerainty.

Bahlol's next undertaking was an expedition to Gwalior. Raja Man Singh of Gwalior was obliged to make him a present of eighty lakhs of tankas. While he was returning from Gwalior, he fell ill and died near Jalali in the middle of July 1489.

His estimate

Bahlol Lodi was a brave and intrepid soldier and a successful general. Possessed of sturdy commonsense, realism and sagacity, he realised the possibilities of the time and set before him a task that was commensurate with his ability and resources. He did not entertain the ambition of reconquering provinces of the Sultanate of Delhi, like the Dakhin or Bangal or even Rajasthan and Malwa. His most important objective was to re-establish Delhi's control over the Doab and the surrounding districts, and also over Jaunpur. He had no time to re-organise the civil administration. But, both as a military leader and as an administrator, he was superior to his immediate

predecessors, from the death of Firoz to that of Ala-ud-din Alam Shah. He knew full well that his Afghan nobles and followers, who were accustomed to tribal and individual independence, would not tolerate the revival of the Turkish theory of sovereignty. Bahlol, therefore, never gave himself airs and declared publicly that he considered himself to be the noble of his nobles. He did not take his seat upon the throne and never insisted on his nobles standing in his court. He allowed his chief nobles to share his carpet. If any of his top-ranking nobles was offended, Bahlol would go to his residence and try hard to pacify him. He would, sometimes, remove his sword from his waist and place it before the offended party. He would even go to the extent of taking off his turban and saying that if his nobles thought him unworthy, they might choose anyone else as their king. Such a policy worked very well, throughout his reign, which was fairly long. Bahlol had hardly any trouble from his powerful Afghan followers.

This Lodi Sultan was a kind-hearted man. It is said that he never turned away a beggar or a poor man from his gate. He was also chivalrous to the fair sex. When queen Malika-i-Jahan of Sultan Husain Shah of Jaunpur fell into his hands, he treated her with great courtesy and consideration and sent her back to her husband under a powerful escort. He would administer justice evenly, according to his lights. He was not unnecessarily fond of wealth. Though himself not well-educated, Bahlol is said to have patronised scholars and men of learning. He was devoted to his religion, but was not fanatical like his son and successor, Sikandar.

Bahlol has two main achievements to his credit. The first was the restoration of the credit and prestige of the Delhi kingdom which had fallen considerably low under the later Tughluqs and their successors, the Sayyids. His second achievement was the conquest and annexation of the kingdom of Jaunpur. Inspite of these achievements, Bahlol's place in the history of the Sultanate of Delhi is not very high. He was a moderately successful king.

SIKANDAR LODI, 1489—1517

His accession

On Bahlol's death his chief nobles became divided on the question of succession to the throne. One group favoured the succession of his third son, Nizam Khan, who was popularly known as Sikandar

Shah; but the other and the more powerful party objected to Nizam's succession on the ground that his mother was the daughter of a goldsmith and urged the claim of Barbak Shah, the eldest son of the deceased and at that time the ruler of Jaunpur. This party had persuaded Bahlol, on his death-bed, to send for Nizam from Delhi lest he should seize the throne in the event of his father's death. But on one pretext or another Nizam had refused to proceed. Meanwhile, Bahlol died. Nizam's mother, who was in the camp with her husband, asserted her son's claim. But she was abused by Isa Khan, Bahlol's cousin, who bluntly told her that a goldsmith mother's son was not eligible for the throne of Delhi. Some of the nobles of the majority party now sympathised with the widow for the discourtesy shown to her. The result was that the Khan-i-Khana manoeuvred things in such a manner as to get the support of the majority of the Pathan nobles for Nizam Khan who was proclaimed king under the title of Sikandar Shah on July 17, 1489.

DOMESTIC POLICY

Suppression of rebellions

Sikandar had to justify his selection. By his policy, character and firm adminstration he showed within a short time that he was the right choice and fittest of all the sons of Bahlol to fill the throne of Delhi. His first task was to set his own house in order by reducing his rivals to submission and increasing the strength of his followers. His uncle, Alam Khan, was one of the candidates for the throne and was preparing to assert his independence in Rapari and Chandawar. Sikandar besieged him at Rapari, defeated him and drove him away from there. Alam Khan took shelter with Isa Khan who was one of the front-rank men who had opposed Sikandar's accession. By a conciliatory policy, Sikandar won over Alam Khan, separated him from Isa Khan and appointed him to the fief of Etawah. He then defeated Isa at Patiali, the latter dying after a few days of the battle. Next, Sikandar defeated his cousin, Azam Humayun, who, too, was a candidate for the throne, took away Kalpi from him and bestowed it upon Muhammad Khan Lodi. Then he defeated Tatar Khan Lodi, another opponent, but generously allowed him to remain in possession of Jhatra. Thus, within a year of his accession, Sikandar succeeded in either subduing or pacifying his opponents and consolidating his power.

Subduing of Barbak Shah

Sikandar was alive to the danger of a divided monarchy. Accordingly, he was anxious to persuade his elder brother, Barbak Shah of Jaunpur, to live in subordinate alliance with him. He sent a mission of peace to Jaunpur which, however, did not meet with success. Sikandar probably felt that, having deprived him of his birth-right, he should make amends to Barbak Shah. But being instigated by Husain Shah, the ex-king of Jaunpur, who had taken shelter in Bihar and felt that a quarrel between the two brothers might open a way for him to recover his lost kingdom, Barbak refused to come to terms with his brother. Sikandar, therefore, prepared to fight. He defeated Barbak who had advanced at the head of an army as far as Kanauj. After this discomfiture, Barbak fled to Badaun, but he was besieged there and compelled to surrender. Sikandar was generous enough to restore him to Jaunpur as a titular king; but he divided that kingdom into fiefs which he distributed among his own followers and placed spies even at Barbak's court and household. A little after, a great rebellion of zamindars residing in the kingdom of Jaunpur occurred. It was instigated by Husain Shah. Barbak could not cope with the situation and had to abandon Jaunpur and flee to Driyabad near Lucknow. Sikandar took prompt action, crushed the rebellion and reinstated Barbak Shah a second time in his kingdom as his vassal. But Barbak proved an utterly incompetent administrator and was, therefore, removed and placed in confinement. Sikandar then appointed his own governor at Jaunpur.

Abasement of the nobility

Having established his absolute authority over his paternal kingdom by reducing Jaunpur to submission, Sikandar turned to the task of bringing his Afghan nobles under proper discipline and control. Without making a fundamental change in the system of government, the Sultan, who was aware of the fissiparous tendencies of his chiefs, wanted to put a curb on their individualistic tendency and tribal independence and to make them contribute to the common good of the entire Pathan community in India. He insisted on proper audit of the accounts of income and expenditure of his governors and other officers. He severely punished defalcation and embezzlement. Mubarak Khan Lodi, one of the chief nobles who had been

entrusted with the collection of revenues of Jaunpur, was punished and compelled to pay into the treasury the state revenues which he had embezzled. Moreover, Sikandar compelled his nobles to show formal respect to the king in the *darbar* and outside. He would not tolerate any discourtesy or disrespect on their part. While playing polo at Jaunpur some of the nobles indulged in a free fight in the presence of the king. Sikandar was highly enraged and ordered one of the offending nobles to be flogged in his presence and he dealt harshly with others. The nobles, in their turn, conspired to depose Sikandar and place his younger brother, Fateh Khan, on the throne. But the conspiracy was divulged and the Sultan banished twenty-two of his nobles from the court. By his strict policy Sikandar, thus, succeeded in bringing the Afghan peers under proper discipline. Not only was he respected as an embodiment of authority, but even his orders were received with a formal ceremony by governors and fief-holders. When Sikandar issued a *farman* to a noble, the latter had to receive it six miles in advance and with due ceremony. When the *farman* was read aloud, all had to listen to it standing.

Much of Sikandar's success as an administrator was due to the excellent espionage system which he borrowed from Ala-ud-din Khalji. The Sultan appointed trustworthy spies and news-writers and posted them everywhere, including even in the houses of his nobles. He was so well posted with up-to-date information that people credited him with supernatural powers. It was widely believed that the Sultan was supplied with news by *genii*. Sikandar was not only a strict disciplinarian but he even tried to administer justice evenly according to the Islamic standard. That was another reason why he succeeded in restoring respect for law and order. Sikandar's reign was marked by material prosperity for which the Sultan was to some extent responsible. He abolished duties on corn and removed the galling restrictions on trade. Grain and cloth and other necessities of life became cheap.

Religious policy

Sikandar's religious policy was that of a fanatical Muslim. Even as a prince he had given evidence of bigotry. He wanted to prohibit the Hindus from bathing in the sacred tank at Thaneshwar. When he became king, he indulged in the policy of destroying temples and images, and building mosques in their places. He broke the sacred image of the *Jwalamukhi* temple at Nagarkot and gave its

pieces to butchers to use them as weights to weigh meat with. He destroyed many a temple at Mathura, Mandrail, Utagir, Narwar, Chanderi and other places. He ordered a Hindu, named Bodhan, to be put to death for no other offence than saying that "Hinduism is as true a religion as Islam." Sikandar did not permit Hindus to bathe in the Yamuna at bathing ghats and he prohibited barbers from shaving their beards. Like Firoz, he made an attempt to seduce Hindus and convert them to Islam. Such a policy was bound to alienate a large section of his subjects.

FOREIGN POLICY

Conquest of Bihar

Unlike his father, Sikandar was a man of lofty ambitions and had formed the design of conquering as many of the lost provinces of the Turkish Sultanate of Delhi as possible. His subjugation of his brother, Barbak Shah, and annexation of Jaunpur to his kingdom brought him into conflict with Bihar which was then considered a part of Bangal. Some of the zamindars of the Jaunpur province had intimate relations with the ex-king, Husain Shah Sharqi, who now lived in exile in Bihar. Sikandar was anxious to reduce these zamindars to complete submission. He, therefore, led an expedition against Phaphamau (near Allahabad) whose ruler, Raja Bhil, was a leader of the disaffected barons. Inspite of the Sultan's exertion, the raja could not be effectively subdued. On the other hand, in the expedition of 1494 the Sultan's army suffered greatly and a considerable number of his horses died in the campaign. The rebel rajas, who were in league with Husain Shah, invited him to invade Jaunpur and fight Sikandar, writing to him that nine-tenths of the horses of the Sultan's army had perished and that he was not in a position to offer resistance. Husain Shah, in response to this invitation, arrived from Bihar with a huge force. Sikandar proceeded to obstruct his passage and a severe battle was fought near Banaras which resulted in the defeat and flight of Husain. Sikandar pursued the retreating enemy and occupied Bihar which, thus, became a part of the Sultanate of Delhi. He stayed in Bihar for some time and raided Tirhut whose raja was obliged to submit and agreed to pay a tribute.

Treaty with Bangal

This invasion of Bihar was resented by Ala-ud-din Husain Shah, king of Bangal, who had treated Sultan Husain of Jaunpur

INDIA IN 1517 A.D.
Sikandar Lodi.

TRANS-OXIANA
Bukhara
Samarqand
Tashkent
Andijan
FARGHANA
CHINA
Balkh
Qunduz
Sanipul
Ghur
Herat
AFGHANISTAN
MUGHULS
Kabul
Ghazni
Kandahar
PERSIA
BAJAUR
SWAT
KASHMIR
KARAQORAM
TIBET
Peshawar
Taxila
Srinagar
Khushab
Naushahra
Bhera
SialKot
Jammu
Nagarkot
Kangara
Lahore
Dipalpur
Jalandar
Multan
Sarhind
Somana
Thaneshwar
Panipat
Kalat
Uch
Hisar
Hansi
Delhi
Aligarh
Amaroha
Sambhal
Badaun
Shamsabad
Kanauj
Lucknow
Awadh
Agra
Mathura
Bayana
Khanua
Etawa
Gwalior
Kalpi
Jaunpur
Banaras
Chunar
Patna
Gaya
Hajo
Gauhati
KAMARUPA
Sylhet
Lakhanauti
BIHAR
BANGAL
NEPAL
SUMRAS
Rohri
Bikaner
Sehwan
Jaisalmer
Narnaul
Nagaur
Amber
RAJASTHAN
Merta
Jodhpur
Siwana
Ajmer
Jalor
Abu
Chitter
Rantambhor
Amarkot
Thatta
Anhilwara
GUJARAT
MALWA
Ujjain
Dhar
Mandu
Bhilsa
Garhmandal
Chanderi
Mahoba
Kalinjar
Khajuraho
Junagarh
Somanath
Diu
Daman
KHANDESH
Asirgarh
Gwaligarh
Illichpur
BARAR
(1484)
Chanda
Daultabad
(1490)
Ahmadnagar
AHMADNAGAR
BIDAR
Bombay
Chaul
Bijapur
Gulbarga
Bidar
Dabhol
BIJAPUR
(1489)
GOLKUNDA
(1512)
GONDWANA
Golkunda
Rajamundry
Vizagapattam
Ganjam
Simhachalam
Naupada
Jajnagar
Puri
ORISSA
EMPIRE
Raichur
Mudgal
Sandabur
(1000)
Masulipattam
Vijayanagar
VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE
Chandragiri
Kanchi
Gingee
Seringapattam
Calicut
Tanjore
Cochin
Madura
CEYLON
Colombo
Nadia
Satgaon
Lakhanauti
Sonargaon
Chatgaon
BURMA
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL
ANDAMAN IS.

Boundary of the Empire.

Independent Provincial Boundaries.

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Miles

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as his protege and Bihar as a part of his kingdom. He sent his son, Daniyal, to oppose the progress of the Delhi army and the latter, under Mahmud Khan Lodi and Mubarak Khan Lohani, got ready to fight. But both, Sikandar and Ala-ud-din Husain, agreed to conclude a treaty without fighting. Each party bound itself not to invade the territory of the other. The king of Bangal promised, in addition, not to give shelter to Sikandar's enemies. Thus the eastern boundary of Sikandar's dominion was pushed to the western frontier of Bangal.

Conquest of Dholpur and other places

Sikandar was fired with the ambition of conquering Gwalior and Dholpur. After a stubborn fighting, which lasted for a considerable time, the Sultan succeeded in capturing Dholpur from its raja, Vinayak Deo, in 1502. But the conquest of Gwalior was beyond Sikandar's ability and strength. For several years in succession he led expeditions against Man Singh (1486—1516), the ruler of that great fortress and the country around it. He made Agra his capital in 1504, which had been a mere village and a dependancy of Bayana upto that year, in order to make it a military cantonment and a base of operations against Dholpur, Gwalior and Malwa. Years of exertion brought Mandrail, Utagir, Narwar[1] and Chanderi under the control of Delhi, but Gwalior could not be conquered and annexed. The Sultan had his designs on Malwa too; but he failed to acquire that prosperous kingdom. In 1510 he got Nagaur into his possession. These military achievements, though not very dazzling, considerably raised the prestige of Sikandar as a conqueror.

Death

The later years of the Sultan's reign were spent in aggressive wars against the Hindu chiefs of Gwalior, Dholpur, Narwar and some other principalities on the border of Rajasthan. Incessant military activity impaired his health. He was taken ill on his return from Bayana where he had gone in order to lead his projected expedition against Malwa. Despite all possible medical aid he died on November 21, 1517.

Estimate

Sikandar was the greatest king of the Lodi dynasty. Medieval

[1] Narwar fell in 1506 and along with it Padmawati, the famous capital of the Naga kings of the 4th century A.D. In 1512, Safdar Khan, a Lodi governor, built a fort there.

chroniclers bestow lavish praise on him and maintain that he was an extremely able, just, benevolent and God-fearing ruler. Their opinion has generally been endorsed by modern writers. A critical examination of the important events of his reign and the details of his administration and policy will, however, show that there were two facets of Sikandar's personality and character. He was, without doubt, a competent ruler; but his policy of religious persecution was calculated to alienate the sympathy of the vast majority of his subjects and neutralise the effect of his otherwise good administration.

Sikandar Lodi was gifted with kingly looks. He was tall, handsome and well built. Abdullah, the author of *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, says that Sikandar was so handsome in his boyhood that Shaikh Hasan, a well known Muslim divine, fell in love with him and the prince, who did not like the Shaikh's visits, one day singed his beard by holding his face forcibly near the fire. He was also very impressive in his bearing and daily conduct. Very highly educated, he was fond of literature and poetry and wrote verses in Persian under the *nom de plume* of 'Gul Rukh'. Born of a Hindu mother, he was anxious to show to his co-religionists that he was a *pakka* Muslim, not inferior in any way to those who belonged to pure Afghan lineage. He was thoroughly devoted to his religion, though he was not punctillious about saying the five daily prayers. Unlike his predecessors and against the common Islamic practice, he shaved his beard. He was fond of wine, though he did not drink it openly. Sikandar was very energetic, smart and full of activity. His whole reign was spent in incessant warfare. Of course, he was a good soldier and a successful commander.

In conformity with oriental practice, Sikandar dispensed a lot of charity. Cooked and uncooked food was distributed and large sums of money were spent in charity on Muslim festivals, such as, the anniversary of Muhammad's birth and death, Muharram, Shab-i-Barat and the two 'Ids. Stipends and subsistence allowances were granted to the *ulema* and to Muslim scholars and poor people. Like Firoz Tughluq, he used to arrange for dowry for the daughters of Muslim widows on the occasion of their marriage.

As a ruler, Sikandar attained more than ordinary success. While his father had been content with the position of *primus inter pares*, Sikandar's ideal of kingship was more akin to the Turkish and

Hindu conception of sovereignty than to that of the Afghans. He rightly believed that the Afghan conception of kingship could not be applicable to India, as India was not Afghanistan. In view of this, Sikandar attempted to undo the effects of divided sovereignty and brought his brother, Barbak Shah of Jaunpur, under his complete control. He curbed the individualistic tendencies of his Afghan nobles and compelled them to submit their accounts to the State audit. The highest of the Afghan peers were obliged to show formal respect to the king and to obey his orders. Not only did it become impossible for any noble, however highly placed he might be, to defy the Sultan's orders but none even dared to show disrespect to his *farmans* which had to be received with ceremony. Sikandar was, thus, able to infuse vigour and discipline in the administration. The prestige of the Sultanate as well as of the crown, which had fallen low during the days of the later Tughluqs, was restored.

The main achievement of the Sultan was the conquest and annexation of Bihar. Besides he conquered and annexed Dholpur, Narwar, Chanderi and a part of the kingdom of Gwalior.

Sikandar was a patron of learning. He was surrounded by scholars. By his orders a Sanskrit treatise on medicine was translated into Persian and given the name of *Farhang-i-Sikandari*. He patronised music and built many mosques. He made Agra his capital and beautified it with buildings, mosques and caravan-sarais. He built his father's tomb at Delhi.

The greatest blot on Sikandar's character as a ruler was his relentless bigotry. He had made it a rule to destroy Hindu temples during the course of his expeditions and to build mosques on their sites. He tried to repress Hinduism and exalt Islam in every possible way. Under him the Sultanate became as active a proselytising agency as in the time of Firoz Tughluq. His religious policy was, therefore, unwise and calculated to alienate the sympathy of his Hindu subjects and undermine his own authority.

IBRAHIM LODI, 1517—1526

His accession

After Sikandar's death his eldest son, Ibrahim, was elevated to the throne with the unanimous consent of the Afghan peers on November 21, 1517. He assumed the title of Ibrahim Shah.

FOREIGN POLICY

The subjugation of Gwalior

Ibrahim's foreign policy aimed at completing the work of conquest begun by his father. He decided to pursue Sikandar's designs of conquering and annexing Gwalior which had more than once defied the late Sultan's might. A convenient pretext was furnished by the ruler of that principality who gave shelter to Ibrahim's brother, Jalal Khan. Moreover, the valiant Man Singh, who had successfully resisted Sikandar, had died and was succeeded by his son, Vikramajit, who was much inferior to his father in ability and poetical wisdom. Ibrahim despatched Azam Humayun Sarwani at the head of an army of thirty thousand horse and three hundred elephants to besiege Gwalior. Another army was sent from Agra to co-operate with him in this difficult task. Azam Humayun threw himself with zeal into the work of besieging the giant fortress. As a result of the operations an important outwork was captured. The siege progressed satisfactorily and, eventually, the fortress surrendered. Vikramajit became a vassal of the Sultan of Delhi. This was Ibrahim's greatest achievement.

Defeat at the hands of Rana Sanga

Anxious to push his father's policy of aggressive conquest to its logical conclusion, Ibrahim undertook an expedition against Mewar, then the most notable State in Rajasthan. Its ruler was the valiant Rana Sangram Singh, popularly known as Sanga, without whose subjugation the Sultan could not hope to establish his supremacy in central Hindustan. So he despatched a powerful army under the command of Mian Makhan with whom were associated such well known Afghan officers as Husain Khan Zarbakhsh, Mian Khan-i-Khana Qarmali and Mian Maruf. The army of invasion numbered thirty thousand horse and three hundred elephants. But it suffered from dissension and disaffection among its chief officers. As it reached the frontier of Mewar, it was encountered and defeated by the Rana with great slaughter near Bakarol in the present Asind district of Mewar. Mian Makhan and his men fled in panic. But they were attacked by the Rajputs near Ghatoli (on the border of Bundi) and a considerable number of them was annihilated.[2]

[2] Babur mentions the defeat of Ibrahim in his Memoirs.

INDIA IN 1526 A.D.

Ibrahim Lodi.

TRANS-OXIANA
Bukhara
Samarqand
Tashkent
FARGHANA
Andijan
AFGHANISTAN
Balkh
Qunduz
Ghur
Maimana
Sar-i-pul
Herat
Kabul
Ghazni
Peshawar
Kandahar
BAJAUR
SWAT
KASHMIR
Taxila
Srinagar
Khushab
Naushahra
Jammu
Bhera
Sialkot
Lahore
Kangara
Jalandar
KARAQORAM
CHINA
TIBET
PERSIA
MUGHULS
Multan
Kalat
ARGHUNS
Uch
Sarhind
Samana
Panipat
Hansi
Delhi
Sambhal
Badaun
Bahraich
NEPAL
Bikaner
Narnaul
Kuil
Agra
Mathura
Nagaur
Amber
Sehwan
SINDH
Merta
Sambhar
Khanua
Awadh
Etawa
Amarkot
RAJASTHAN
Ajmer
Fatehpursikri
Jaunpur
BIHAR
Hajo
KAMARUPA
Thatta
Jalor
Abu
Chittor
Gwalior
Kalpi
Orchha
Chanderi
Kalinjar
Patna
Lakhanauti
Gaya
Murshidabad
BANGAL
Anhilwara
MALWA
Ujjain
Dhar
Bhilsa
Garhmandal
Nadia
Sonargaon
Chatgaon
GUJARAT
Junagarh
Somanath
KHANDESH
Asirgarh
Gwaligarh
Illichpur
BARAR
(1484)
Daultabad
Chanda
GONDWANA
ORISSA
Puri
Ganjam
Simhachalam
Naupada
Vizagapattam
Rajamundry
Warangal
Golkunda
(1512)
GOLKUNDA
Ahmadnagar
(1490)
AHMADNAGAR
BIDAR
(1525)
Kolapur
Bider
Chaul
Dabhol
Bijapur
(1489)
Gulbarga
KONKAN
Raichur
Mudgal
Sandebur
(Panjim)
Vijayanagar
Bezwada
EMPIRE
VIJAYANAGAR
Nellore
Penugonda
Kanchi
Gingee
Sringapattam
Calicut
Tanjore
Madura
CEYLON
Colombo
BURMA
ANDAMAN Is.
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL

Boundary of the Lodi Empire.

Independent Kingdoms.

0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles

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Suppression of Jalal Khan's rebellion

Ibrahim's reign was distracted by party rivalry. Soon after his accession, a party of selfish nobles advocated partition of the kingdom and managed to secure the elevation of Ibrahim's younger brother, Jalal Khan, to the throne of Jaunpur. The Sultan was compelled under pressure to agree to the partition. Even before Jalal could establish himself at Jaunpur, Ibrahim repented and one of his important nobles, Khan-i-Jahan Lohani, strongly condemned the foolish policy of dividing the kingdom and pressed for Jalal Khan's recall. Ibrahim entrusted the task to Haibat Khan. Having failed in the policy of persuading Jalal to return to Delhi, Haibat Khan had recourse to diplomacy. By a clever policy he seduced most of Jalal Khan's followers which compelled the latter to abandon Jaunpur and establish himself at Kalpi where he asserted his independence and assumed the title of king. He won over Azam Humayun Sarwani who was at the time besieging Kalinjar on behalf of his master, Sultan Ibrahim. Having united their forces, Jalal and Azam Humayun Sarwani attacked Awadh. Ibrahim was obliged to march against the rebels. But, fortunately Azam Humayun abandoned Jalal and returned to the side of Ibrahim. Jalal Khan, having thus been abandoned, returned towards Agra and attacked the garrison there. Ibrahim deputed Malik Adam to reinforce the garrison at Agra. This officer was able to persuade Jalal to give up his pretensions to sovereignty on the promise that he would be allowed to retain possession of Kalpi. Ibrahim, however, refused to ratify the terms and decided to bring about complete submission of his brother. Jalal had, therefore, to flee to take refuge with the raja of Gwalior. Ibrahim thought it necessary to attack that fortress with the double object of securing the person of his brother and occupying the fortress. As he approached near, Jalal Khan fled from Gwalior to Malwa. While the siege was in progress, Jalal, tired of the ill-treatment of the Sultan of Malwa, fled from there to the Gond principality of Garha Katanga. But the Gonds arrested him and sent him a prisoner to Ibrahim. The Sultan ordered him to be imprisoned in Hansi; but the prince was murdered on the way to that place. Ibrahim now became the undisputed ruler of the kingdom without any rival to intrigue against him.

Suppression of the nobles

Ibrahim's success in crushing Jalal Khan's rebellion and establishing his undisputed sway over the kingdom seems to have turned his head. He began to behave and act like an absolute despot. Imbued with the Turkish ideal of sovereignty, he made the impolitic declaration that 'kingship' knows no kingship : all the people were either the king's subjects or vassals. He discarded the Afghan tradition and compelled his nobles to stand in his court in an humble posture with their hands folded across their breasts. He imposed a rigid court ceremonial on the Afghan nobles who, being accustomed to treat the Sultan as one of themselves and to share the royal carpet with Bahlol and sometimes, even with Sikandar, would not brook this humiliation. They strongly resented the king's behaviour whose insolence and arrogance drove a few principal Afghan chiefs into rebellion. Mention has been made of Azam Humayun Sarwani's joining Jalal Khan and then abandoning him and making his peace with the Sultan. Ibrahim does not seem to have forgotten this temporary defection. Consequently, he summoned Azam Humayun and his son, Fateh Khan, from before the walls of Gwalior and threw him into prison. He had already imprisoned Main Bhova, a leading noble of Sikandar's time. This high-handed action incited Islam Khan, another son of Azam Humayun, to rebellion. He assumed the command of his father's army and attacked Ahmad Khan, governor of Agra. The Sultan obliged to collect his army in order to suppress this rebellion. At this very time two other important nobles, namely, Azam Humayun Lodi and Sayeed Khan Lodi, deserted the Sultan, marched away to their fief in Lucknow and prepared to join Islam Khan. An army sent by the Sultan against these two rebels was defeated and driven back with heavy losses. The Sultan became suspicious of other nobles and foolishly warned them that if they failed to crush the rebellion, they would be treated as rebels. He then took the field at the head of fifty thousand horse. The rebel nobles, too, gathered a huge army which swelled to forty thousand cavalry, a large body of infantry and five hundred elephants. A holy man, named Shaikh Raju Bukhari, tried to intervene and settle the dispute by negotiations, but without success. The rebels demanded the release of Azam Humayun Sarwani, which the Sultan refused to agree to. The result was a deadly contested battle. Ahmad Yadgar, the author of the *Makhzan-i-Afghana*, describes the battle in these words :

"Dead bodies, heap upon heap, covered the field; and the number of heads lying upon the ground was beyond the reach of recollection. Streams of blood ran over the plain and whenever, for a length of time, a fierce battle took place in Hindustan, the old men always observed that with this battle no other one was comparable; brothers fighting against brothers; fathers against sons; bows and arrows were laid aside, and the carnage carried on with daggers, swords, knives and javelines." At the end Ibrahim won. He defeated the rebels. Islam Khan was killed and Sayeed Khan was captured. The Sultan rewarded those who had remained loyal by conferring upon them the fiefs that had been in the possession of the rebels.

This success served to make Ibrahim more insolent than before and to encourage him to punish other disloyal barons. Unfortunately Azam Humayun Sarwani and some other nobles died in prison, causing an outburst of indignation and disaffection. Dariya Khan Lohani, governor of Bihar, Khan-i-Jahan Lodi, Mian Husain Qarmali and others rose into rebellion. The Sultan committed another act of folly by ordering the assassination of Shaikh Hasan Qarmali in Chanderi. This convinced the rebels that their lives and honour were not safe as long as Ibrahim remained on the throne. So they took steps to bring about the Sultan's deposition. Dariya Khan Lodi, the leader of the rebels, died at this time. But his son, Bahadur Khan, who held the fief of Bihar, proclaimed himself king under the title of Muhammad Shah. Many rebels now flocked to his standard and his army swelled to one lakh horse. He occupied the whole of the country from Bihar to Sambhal and was joined by Nasir Khan Lohani, the governor of Ghazipur.

The Panjab, too, revolted under its governor Daulat Khan Lodi. His son, Ghazi Khan, escaped from Delhi and reported to his father that if Ibrahim succeeded in putting down the rebellion in Bihar he would deprive him of Lahore. In view of this fear Daulat Khan assumed virtual independence and opened negotiations with Babur, the king of Kabul, whom he invited to invade India and overthrow Ibrahim. This proposal was accepted by Babur who was himself desirous of conquering Hindustan. Daulat Khan Lodi seems to have believed that Babur would come, plunder the country and go back and thus enable him (Daulat Khan Lodi) to establish his power in the Panjab. He was, however, mistaken. At this very time another ambitious Lodi chief, named Alam Khan, an uncle of

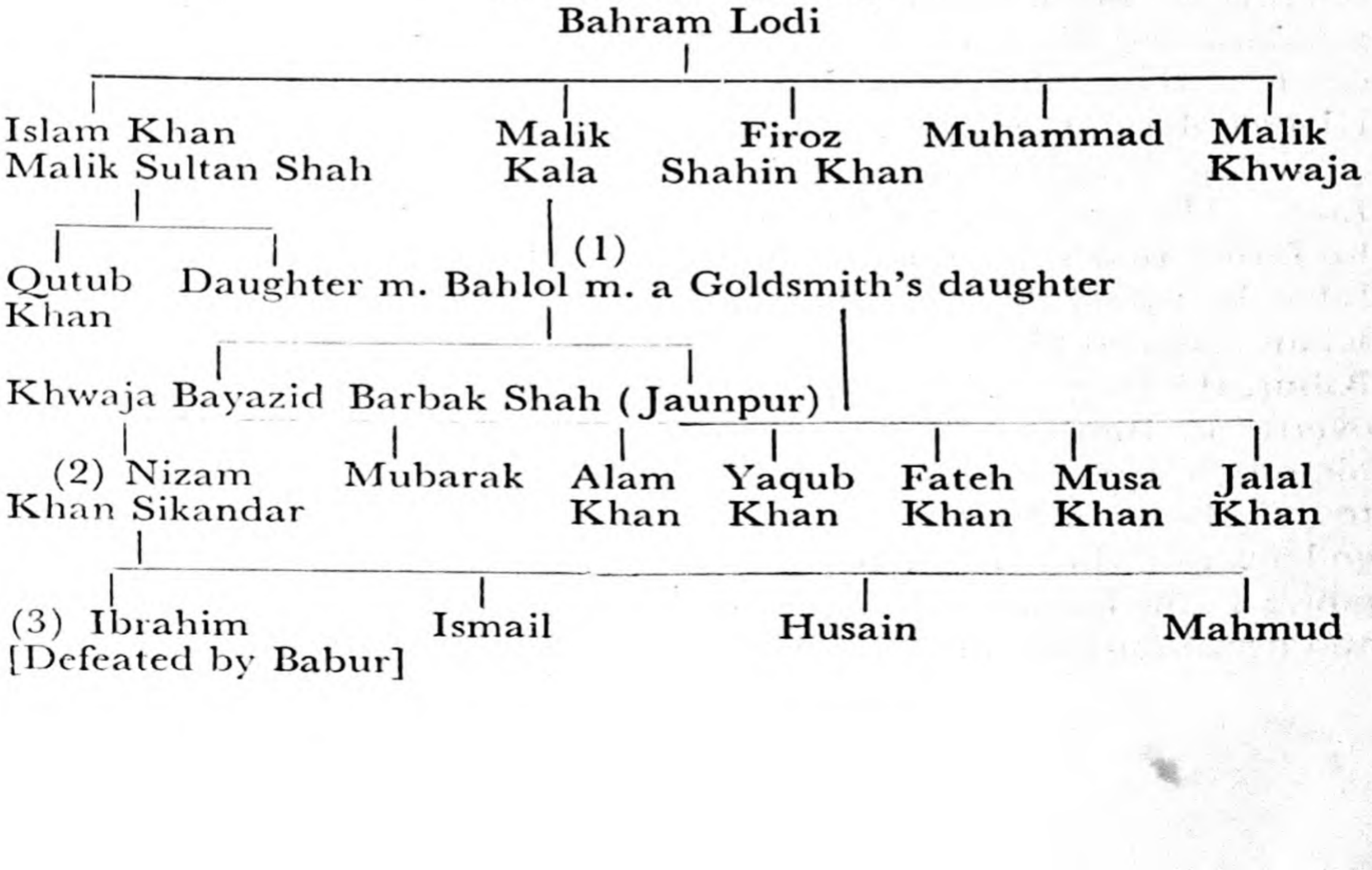
Ibrahim, also appeared on the scene. He was ambitious of becoming king of Delhi and he opened negotiations with Babur. The result was the famous battle of Panipat on April 21, 1526, in which Ibrahim Lodi was defeated and killed. With his death came the end of the Sultanate of Delhi.

His estimate

Though not devoid of ability and intelligence, Ibrahim Lodi proved a sad failure. He was a brave and fearless soldier and a fairly successful commander. He seems to have been honest and laborious. From the meagre account of the medieval chronicles it is clear that his private life was good and that he applied himself to the business of the State with zest. He administered justice as well as any of his predecessors. But, though himself an Afghan, he was ignorant of the character and sentiment of his race. He foolishly abandoned the sagacious policy of his father and grandfather and tried to impose a rigorous discipline and strict court ceremonial on his peers who were fierce democrats and treated the king as nothing more than the noble among the nobles. By his policy of playing the king and insolently punishing those who disregarded his orders, he drove them into rebellion. He thus dug the very foundation of the State and lost his throne and life.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE

The Lodi Dynasty



17

THE PROVINCIAL KINGDOMS

THE NORTHERN INDIA

Jaunpur

Within a few years of the death of Firoz Tughluq some of the provinces of the Sultanate of Delhi asserted their independence and laid the foundation of new ruling dynasties. One of the earliest to do so was Jaunpur, The town of Jaunpur was founded by Firoz Tughluq and named after his cousin, Jauna Khan *alias* Muhammad bin Tughluq. An eunuch, Malik Sarwar, and entitled Sultan-ush-Sharq, was its last governor who threw off allegiance to Delhi during the confusion caused by Timur's invasion and set himself up as a *de facto* king. He did not assume the royal title; but, for all practical purposes, acted as an independent ruler. His dynasty is known after his title as the Sharqi dynasty. Sarwar-ul-mulk extended his authority over Awadh and over a part of the Doab as far as the modern city of Aligarh. He also brought Tirhut and Bihar under his control. He died in 1399 and was succeeded by his adopted son, Malik Qaranphul, who assumed the title of Mubarak Shah. This man was, thus, the first member of the Sharqi dynasty to assume the title of king and to strike coins and cause the *khutba* to be read in his name. During his reign Mallu Iqbal of Delhi undertook an expedition to recover Jaunpur, but he failed to do so. The seed of enmity between Delhi and Jaunpur was, thus, sown in 1401, which led to a prolonged contest between the two ruling houses. Mubarak Shah died in 1402 and was succeeded by his younger brother, who is known to history as Ibrahim Shah.

Ibrahim was the greatest king of the Sharqi dynasty. He ruled for about thirty-four years. He was a cultured prince and was a great patron of learning. He established schools and colleges and endowed them liberally from State funds. Having invited scholars and theologians from various parts of the country, he granted them subsistence allowances and extended to them State patronage in every possible manner. The result was that many scholarly works on

Islamic theology and law and other subjects were produced. The city of Jaunpur was adorned by him with beautiful buildings specially mosques, the most brilliant specimen of which is the famous Atala Masjid. Under him Jaunpur evolved a distinct architecture of its own which is known by the name of the Sharqi style of architecture. The Jaunpur mosques are beautiful to look at, have no minarets of the usual type and bear traces of Hindu influence. He was also fond of music and other fine arts. Owing to its cultural and educational activities of a high order, Jaunpur earned under this king the title of 'Shiraz of India'.

During Ibrahim's reign the relations between Jaunpur and Delhi became bitter. Mahmud Tughluq, who fled to Jaunpur from the tyranny of Mallu, was not treated as a sovereign by Ibrahim and had to satisfy his spite by taking forcible possession of the district of Kanauj which was a part of the kingdom of Jaunpur. Subsequently, Ibrahim came into conflict with Khizr Khan who had become the ruler of Delhi. In 1407, Ibrahim attempted to expel Mahmud from Kanauj which had been taken possession of by the latter after his return from Jaunpur. Ibrahim's foreign policy was ambitious and aggressive. He invaded Bangal, but failed to conquer it. He died in 1436 and was succeeded by his son, Mahmud Shah. This ruler conquered the district of Chunar. But he failed to capture Kalpi. He invaded Delhi, but was defeated by Bahlol Lodi. He died in 1475. His son, Bhikhan, now sat on the throne under the title of Muhammad Shah. He was an unscrupulous ruler and managed to pick a quarrel with his nobles who murdered him and raised his brother, Husain Shah, to the throne. Husain Shah was the last ruler of the Sharqi dynasty. During his reign, the rivalry between Delhi and Jaunpur came to a head and a prolonged war ensued. Husain concluded in 1458 a four years' truce with Bahlol Lodi. During this period he suppressed a rising of the zamindars in Tirhut and carried out a plundering raid into Orissa, compelling the Raja to pay him a large sum of money as indemnity. In 1466 he conducted an expedition against Gwalior, but failed to capture that fortress. Raja Man Singh, however, was obliged to pay him a heavy indemnity. Meanwhile, there was a recrudescence of hostilities between Jaunpur and Delhi. Bahlol Lodi defeated him and compelled him to take shelter in Bihar. He subjugated the whole of Jaunpur and placed his eldest son, Barbak Shah, on its throne. From his

retreat in Bihar, Husain continued to embarrass the ruler of Delhi by his relentless intrigues and by fomenting rebellions among the zamindars of the Jaunpur kingdom. Sikandar Lodi, Bahlol's successor, had, therefore, to take stern measures and to annex Jaunpur permanently to the Sultanate of Delhi. Husain died in exile in Bihar in 1500 A.D. and with his death the Sharqi ruling family came to an end. The Sharqi dynasty reigned in Jaunpur for about eighty-five years. The rule of this family fostered material prosperity and encouraged cultural and educational activities. Jaunpur attained a high place among the provincial kingdoms in the country.

Malwa

The province of Malwa, which was conquered by Ala-ud-din Khalji in 1305, remained a part of the Sultanate of Delhi till 1398. Its governor, Dilawar Khan Ghuri, who was probably appointed by Firoz Tughluq, threw off his allegiance to Delhi after the invasion of Timur and became a *de facto* monarch. But, like Malik-ush-Sharq, he did not formally assume the title of king. He died in 1406 and was succeeded by his son, Alp Khan, who ascended the throne under the title of Hushang Shah. The new king was brave, valorous and full of the spirit of adventure. He took delight in aggressive warfare which continued throughout his reign. In 1422 he made a surprise attack on Orissa and brought from there a huge booty which included seventy-five elephants. Next, he invaded Kherla, occupied it and carried off its raja as a prisoner. He fought with the Sultans of Delhi, Jaunpur, Gujarat and also with the Bahamani ruler of the Dakhin. The aggressive warfare did not bring much gain to Malwa nor did it enhance the reputation of its ruler. Worn out by constant warfare, Hushang Shah died on July 6, 1435. He was succeeded by his son, Ghazi Khan, who assumed the title of Muhammad Shah. He was an utterly incompetent ruler and paid little attention to the business of the State. He was deposed by his minister, Mahmud Khan, who usurped the throne in May 1436. Mahmud assumed the title of Shah and founded a new dynasty known as the Khalji dynasty of Malwa. His authority was, however, challenged by a party of his nobles who refused to acknowledge him as their king. Ahmad Shah I of Gujarat, also, took up the cause of the late Muhammad Shah's son; but Mahmud Khalji succeeded in overcoming the opposition of his enemies. He was a brave soldier and fought against Ahmad Shah I of Gujarat, Muhammad

Shah of Delhi, Muhammad Shah III Bahamani and Rana Kumbha of Mewar. The war between him and Rana Kumbha of Mewar seems to have been indecisive, as both sides claimed success and built 'towers of victory'. Mahmud was the ablest among the Muslim rulers of Malwa. He greatly enlarged his dominion by conquests, extended it to Satpura Range in the south, to the frontier of Gujarat in the west, to Bundelkhand in the east and to Mewar and Bundi on the north. He was recognised Sultan by the Khalifa of Egypt. He also received a mission from Sultan Abu Sa'id of that country. He died on the 1st of June, 1469. According to Farishta, "he was polite, brave, just and learned, and during his reign his subjects, Muhammadan as well as Hindus, were happy and maintained a friendly intercourse with each other. Scarcely a year passed when he did not take the field, so that his tent became his home and the field of battle his resting place. His leisure hours were devoted to hearing the histories and memoirs of the courts of different kings of the world." His reign lasted for thirty-four years.

The next ruler was Ghiyas-ud-din, who succeeded his father, Mahmud, in 1469. He was a religious-minded prince and devoted much of his time to prayers. He even refrained from liquor and the articles of food prohibited by his religion. He loved peace but his domestic life was unhappy owing to a quarrel between his sons. He was poisoned by his eldest son, Nasir-ud-din, who seized the throne in 1500. The new king was a voluptuary and a tyrant. It is said that there were 15,000 women in his harem. He was addicted to drinking too. One day, in a fit of drunkenness, he fell into a lake and was drowned in 1510. His second son ascended the throne under the title of Mahmud II. He called Medini Rai, a powerful Rajput chief of Chanderi, to crush his disloyal nobles and appointed him prime minister. The predominance of the Rajputs at the court excited the jealousy of his Muslim nobles who sought the assistance of Muzaffar Shah II of Gujarat against the powerful minister; but Medini Rai inflicted a defeat on Mahmud himself with the help of Rana Sanga. In this war with Chittor, Mahmud II was taken a prisoner. But the Rana treated him with great generosity and restored his kingdom to him. Inspite of the generous restoration by the Sisodia chief, the power and prestige of the kingdom of Malwa could not be revived and the hostility between Malwa and Mewar did not come to an end. The unwise Mahmud,

who did not appreciate the Rana's act of magnanimity, led an expedition against Ratna Singh, the successor of Sanga. Rana Ratna Singh retaliated and invaded Malwa, and Mahmud was defeated. Next, Mahmud incurred the hostility of Sultan Bahadur Shah of Gujarat by giving shelter to the latter's younger brother, Chand Khan. Bahadur Shah captured Mandu on 17th March, 1531, and the independence of Malwa came to an end (1531). The kingdom of Malwa now became a part of Gujarat till it was invaded by Humayun, the second Mughul ruler of Delhi, in 1535. It remained a province of the Delhi empire under Humayun and Sher Shah. The latter appointed his commander Shujaat Khan its governor. On Shujaat Khan's death, his son, Baz Bahadur, became the governor. Baz Bahadur assumed the title of Sultan during the confusion that followed the death of Islam Shah Sur. In 1562 Baz Bahadur was defeated by Akbar and Malwa was annexed to the Mughal empire.

Gujarat

The wealthy province of Gujarat was conquered by Ala-ud-din Khalji and annexed to the Sultanate of Delhi in 1297. Since that date till 1401 it remained a province of the kingdom of Delhi. In 1391 Zafar Khan, the son of a Rajput convert, was appointed its governor by Muhammad Shah Tughluq II, the youngest son of Firoz Tughluq. Taking advantage of the weakness of the central authority and the confusion caused by Timur's invasion, he set himself up as an independent ruler in 1401. He was, however, temporarily deposed by his rebellious son, Tatar Khan, who proclaimed himself king under the title of Nasir-ud-din Muhammad Shah; but he was put to death by his uncle, Shams Khan. Zafar Khan now recovered his throne and ruled up to 1411 as Sultan Muzaffar Shah. Muzaffar Shah's reign was marked by a conflict between Gujarat and Malwa. The ruler of Malwa, Husang Shah, was defeated and Muzaffar Shah captured Dhar. He died in June 1411, and was succeeded by his grandson, Ahmad Shah. The new ruler was one of the greatest Sultans of Gujarat. He is rightly regarded as the founder of the independence of that kingdom. He ruled for over thirty-one years from 1411 to 1442. He was an ambitious and enterprising prince and extended his dominions by conquest. He fought against the Sultan of Malwa and the rulers of Asirgarh, Rajasthan and other neighbouring states. Endowed with great

energy and ambition, he reorganised the administration and built the modern city of Ahmadabad on the site of the old town of Asawal and transferred his capital to that place. Here he erected several stately buildings including the grand mosque which exists even today. He was a successful ruler and is celebrated in the history of the kingdom for his justice, liberality and munificence. He was, however, a religious fanatic and was intolerant towards his non-Muslim subjects. He died on August 16, 1442. The throne now passed to his eldest son, Muhammad Shah, who reigned from 1442 to 1451. Then came two weak rulers, Qutub-ud-din Ahmad and Daud. Daud was an incompetent ruler and was deposed by his nobles within a few days of his accession. The nobles now raised to the throne a grandson of Ahmad Shah, Abul Fateh Khan, who assumed the title of Mahmud Shah. He is popularly known as Mahmud Begarha.

Mahmud Begarha was the greatest king of his dynasty. He was a valiant soldier, a great conqueror and a successful administrator. He was almost the mountain of a man with a long moustache and stately person having an inordinate appetite. According to a Gujarati historian of standard authority, Mahmud Begarha "added glory and lustre to the kingdom of Gujarat and was the best of all the Gujarat kings, including those who preceded, and all who succeeded him; and whether for abounding justice and generosity.....for the diffusion of the laws of Islam and of Musalmans, for soundness in judgment, alike in boyhood, in manhood and in old age, for power, for valour and for victory, he was a pattern of excellence." He ruled for fifty-three years. His first work was to put down his hostile courtiers who wanted to raise his brother, Hasan Khan, to the throne. Next, he embarked on a career of conquests. He defeated the Sumra and Sodha chiefs of Kutch and conquered the forts of Jaunagarh and Champaner. He punished the pirates of Jagat (Dwarika). He took up the cause of Nizam Shah Bahamani against Mahmud Khalji of Malwa whom he defeated. The extent of the Gujarat kingdom reached its extreme limits under him. Towards the end of his reign he led an expedition, in alliance with the Sultan of Egypt, against the Portuguese who had monopolised lucrative trade in the Indian seas. The Egyptian fleet was commanded by Amir Husain, the Kurd governor of Jedda; while the Indian contingent was under the charge of Malik Ayaz. A Portuguese squadron was defeated near Chaul in 1508 but the Portuguese recovered their loss in 1509 and inflicted a

crushing defeat on the allied fleet near Diu. This success enabled the Portuguese to recover their naval supremacy on the sea coast. Mahmud Begarha was obliged to grant them a site for a factory at Diu. Mahmud died in November 1511, and was succeeded by his son, Muzaffar II. The new ruler fought with the Rajputs under Medini Rai and restored Mahmud Khalji of Malwa to the throne. He died in April 1526. Then followed two brief reigns of Sikandar and Mahmud II who were incompetent rulers and ruled for a few months each. In July 1526, Bahadur Shah, another son of Muzaffar II, became king.

Bahadur Shah, who ruled from 1526 to 1537, was one of the ablest rulers of his time. Like his grandfather, Mahmud Begarha, he was endowed with courage, valour and love of enterprise. Immediately after his accession, he embarked on a career of conquest. Having defeated Mahmud II of Malwa, he annexed that kingdom to Gujarat in 1531. Next, he invaded Mewar and stormed the great fortress of Chittor in 1531. But he committed the mistake of giving shelter to Humayun's rebellious cousins which involved him in a conflict with the Mughul empire. Humayun defeated him and occupied Malwa and, subsequently, drove him away from Gujarat also. But Humayun had to withdraw his troops. Bahadur now regained his kingdom and formed the project of expelling the Portuguese from Gujarat, as they had refused to give him help against Humayun. The portuguese governor, Nunho da Cunha, beguiled him on board his ship in February 1537 and had him treacherously drowned in the sea. After his death there was a series of weak rulers in Gujarat. During their reign the administration was weak and there was confusion throughout the kingdom. Taking advantage of this, Akbar, the great Mughul emperor, conquered Gujarat, and annexed it to his empire in 1572.

Bangal

Bangal was conquered and brought under the Sultanate of Delhi by Ikhtiyar-ud-din Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji during the last decade of the 12th century A.D. But after his death, his successors tried to assert their independence. They were encouraged in their design, as the province was rich and was far away from Delhi, and the people, who were anxious to enjoy local autonomy, probably supported them. Balban compelled Bangal to accept the suzerainty of Delhi and appointed his son, Bughra Khan, its governor. But, after his death, Bughra asserted his independence. Ghiyas-ud-din

Tughluq tried to solve the problem by partitioning Bangal into three independent administrative divisions. These were Lakhanauti, Satgaon and Sonargaon. Even this did not help to prevent the Bangalis from becoming rebellious. Muhammad bin Tughluq had to take steps to assert the supremacy of Delhi. But, even before his death, the province again cut off its connection with Delhi. In 1345, Haji Iliyas undid the partition and became the ruler of united Bangal under the title of Shamsh-ud-din Iliyas Shah. He was an enterprising ruler and a great fighter. He raided Orissa and Tirhut and exacted tributes from them. He even tried to encroach upon the territory of Delhi. Firoz Tughluq was, consequently, obliged to lead an expedition to punish him. But he failed to recover Bangal. Iliyas died in 1357 after a prosperous reign which lasted for about twelve years.

Iliyas's son, Sikandar, now became king in 1357. During his reign Firoz Tughluq again made an attempt to reduce Bangal to submission, but he failed to do so. Sikandar died in 1393, after a prosperous reign of about thirty-six years. He was succeeded by Ghiyas-ud-din Azam who was an able ruler. He is said to have been devoted to his religion and was fond of Persian literature. He established friendly relations with China. He died in 1410. His son, Saif-ud-din Hamza Shah, now became king. But he was a weak ruler. During his time Raja Ganesh, a Brahman zamindar of Bhaturia and Dinajpur, acquired ascendancy at his court, as the result of which the Sultan was relegated to the position of a nominal ruler. Hamza Shah died after a reign of one year and a few months. We are told by local historians that Raja Ganesh set himself up as an independent king. Subsequently, he abdicated in favour of his son, Jadu, who, some years after his accession, turned a Muslim and assumed the title of Jalal-ud-din Muhammad Shah. He died in 1431. Then came to the throne his son, named Shamsh-ud-din Ahmad, who reigned upto 1442. He was an unpopular ruler, and during his reign, power was usurped by turbulent nobles. After him there were two puppet rulers, one after the other, who ruled only for a brief period. The throne then passed to Nasir-ud-din, a grandson of Haji Iliyas. This ruler assumed the high-sounding title of Nasir-ud-din Abul Muzaffar Mahmud Shah. He reigned peacefully for seventeen years and built a few notable buildings at Gaur and a mosque at Satgaon. He died in 1460 and was succeeded by his son,

Rukn-ud-din Barbak Shah, who was a good ruler. In 1461 his son, Shamsh-ud-din Yusuf Shah, became king. He was a virtuous and learned monarch. He died in 1481, and his son, Sikandar II, became king. As he was a man of defective intellect, he was deposed in favour of Jalal-ud-din Fateh Shah, a son of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud. He was murdered in 1486 by his Abyssinian slaves whose leader captured the throne and set himself up as Barbak Shah. Confusion now entered the affairs of Bangal and lasted for some time till order was restored by Indil Khan, a courtier who became king under the title of Saif-ud-din Firoz. He is said to have been an able administrator and a popular king. He died in 1489 and was succeeded by his son, Nasir-ud-din Mahmud Shah II. He was, however, murdered by an ambitious Abyssinian, named Sidi Badr, who seized the throne and assumed the title of Shamsh-ud-din Abu Nasr Muzaffar Shah. He was a tyrant. Supported by his fellow Abyssinians, he committed great oppression upon the people. The nobles rose against him and besieged him in Gaur. He died during the course of the siege. The nobles now gave the throne to Ala-ud-din Hussain Shah in 1493. This king laid the foundation of a new dynasty which ruled for about fifty years and carried out useful measures for the welfare of the people. One of his most important tasks was to suppress the palace guards and to expel the Abyssinians from the kingdom. In 1494 he gave shelter to Sultan Husain of Jaunpur. This brought him into conflict with Sikandar Lodi with whom he was obliged to make peace which fixed the eastern frontier of Bihar to be the boundary between the two kingdoms. Ala-ud-din Husain Shah extended the boundary of his kingdom as far as the borders of Orissa. He captured Magadha and Kamatapur in Kooch Bihar. He died in 1518 and was succeeded by his eldest son, Nasib Khan, who assumed the title of Nasir-ud-din Nusrat Shah. Like his father, he, too, was a good and successful ruler. He defeated the king of Tirhut and appointed his own governor to that territory. Nusrat was a patron of literature and art. Under his patronage the *Mahabharata* was translated into Bangali. He built the two famous mosques, Bara Sona Masjid and Qadam Rasul, at Gaur. He died in 1533 and was succeeded by his son, Ala-ud-din Firoz Shah. This king's reign lasted for about three months. He was killed by his uncle, Ghiyas-ud-din Mahmud Shah, who proved to be the last king of the dynasty. Sher Shah drove him away from Bangal and occupied the province in 1538.

Kashmir

The first Muslim Sultan of Kashmir was Shamsh-ud-din Shah who seized the throne of that country in 1339. His original name was Shah Mirza and he was an adventurer from Swat. He had taken service under the last Hindu ruler of Kashmir and had increased his power so considerably that he set aside the descendants of the Raja and himself became king. He is said to have been a wise and generous monarch. He died in 1349. His four sons, Jamshid, Ala-ud-din, Shihab-ud-din, and Qutub-ud-din, then ruled over Kashmir, one after another, for about forty-six years. After Qutub-ud-din's death his son, Sikandar, came to the throne in 1394. It was during his time that Timur invaded northern India; but, fortunately, Kashmir was saved from the terrible experience of the north-western India. Sikandar was a powerful ruler and a patron of Islamic learning. Many scholars from Persia, Arabia and Mesopotamia found a cordial welcome at his court. But he was a religious bigot and was bitterly opposed to the religion of his subjects. He persecuted the Hindus and either converted or drove away Brahmans from Kashmir, allowing only eleven families to remain there. He destroyed many temples, the most important of which was the Martand temple at Mattan. This giant work of art stands in its half-burnt and ruined condition even now, and relates, by its presence, the story of the iconoclastic zeal of the Sultan. For this fanaticism he earned the title of Sikandar the *But-shikan* or 'Idol-breaker'. After a reign of twenty-two years and nine months he died in 1416 and was succeeded by his son, Ali Shah. His reign lasted for a few years. He was deposed by his brother, Shah Khan, who ascended the throne in June 1420, and assumed the title of Zain-ul-Abidin. Zain-ul-Abidin was the greatest Sultan of Kashmir. He was so liberal, enlightened and benevolent that he has been called 'the Akbar of Kashmir'. He allowed the Kashmiri pandit families that had been banished by Sikandar to return to their homes. He admitted Hindu scholars to his society and abolished the hated *jizya*. He prohibited cow-slaughter and gave perfect religious freedom to all his subjects. Zain-ul-Abidin was a good scholar of Persian, Hindi and Tibetan, besides Kashmiri. He was a patron of literature and art, painting and music. He ordered the translation of the *Mahabharata* and the *Rajatarangini* into Persian. Similarly, several notable Arabic and Persian books were translated into Hindi. He took steps for the establishment of complete law and

order and put down highway robbery. He reduced the burden of taxation on his subjects and reformed the currency. He regulated the prices of commodities and established his control over the market. Kashmir enjoyed extraordinary prosperity during his reign. He died towards the end of 1470 and was succeeded by his son, Haidar Shah.

Haidar Shah seems to have been a fairly competent ruler. His successors, however, were weak and incompetent. The result was maladministration and confusion. Several parties sprang up and contended with one another for supremacy. In 1540 Mirza Haidar, a relative of Babur, conquered Kashmir. Though acting as a representative of Humayun, Mirza Haidar, in practice, was an independent king. In 1551 he was defeated and driven out by the Kashmiri nobles. But the quarrel between the nobles continued as before. In 1555 the Chakk tribe acquired ascendancy and one of its members became king of Kashmir. It was conquered by Akbar and annexed to the Mughul empire in 1586.

Orissa

The kingdom of Orissa, which extended from the mouth of the Ganga to that of the Godavari in the south, was consolidated by Anantavarman Choda Ganga, whose reign lasted for about seventy years (*cir.* 1076-1148). He was a remarkable ruler. Besides being a valiant soldier and conqueror, he was a patron of religion and of Sanskrit and Telugu literatures. He built the famous Jagannath temple at Puri. His notable successor was Narasimha I (1238-64). He and his successor successfully repelled the Turkish invaders and protected their kingdom. After his death his dynasty began to decline. It was supplanted in or about 1434 by a new dynasty which ruled over Orissa for more than a century.

The founder of this new dynasty was Kapilendra, who was a ruler of ability and courage. He successfully defended his kingdom from the aggressions of the Bahamani rulers and those of Vijayanagar. The next ruler was Purushottama (1470-97), during whose reign the kingdom began to decline and lost the southern half of its territory from the Godavari downwards. He was succeeded by his son, Prataprudra (1496-1540), who was obliged to cede a part of his territory south of the Godavari to the king of Vijayanagar. Orissa was also invaded by the Sultan of Golkunda in 1522 and Prataprudra was obliged to submit to humiliating terms. About 1441-42 A.D. Kapilendra's dynasty was supplanted by the Bhoi dynasty whose

founder, Govind, belonged to the Bhoi or writer caste. The Bhoi dynasty ruled upto 1559 when it was overthrown by Mukunda Harichandana. He tried to save Orissa from Muslim invaders. He died in 1568. The kingdom of Orissa was now coveted by the Mughuls as well as by the Kararani Sultans of Bangal. In 1568 it was conquered and annexed to Bangal by Sulaiman, the king of Bangal.

Kamarupa and Assam

In the early years of the thirteenth century there were a number of independent principalities in the Brahmaputra valley, the most important among which was the kingdom of Kamarupa. It was then known as the kingdom of Kamata. It was hemmed in by the Ahoms in the east and the Sultans of Bangal in the west. In the fifteenth century the Khens established their rule over Kamarupa and made Kamatapur, a few miles to the south of Kooch Bihar, their capital. The last ruler of this dynasty, named Nilambar, was overthrown by Ala-ud-din Husain Shah of Bangal in or about 1498. A short time after, Vishasinha of the Koch tribe set himself up as the ruler of Kamarupa, in 1515. The greatest Koch ruler was Nara Narayan. During his reign the kingdom of Kamata reached its nadir of greatness; but, unfortunately, there was dissension between the king and his nobles as the result of which the kingdom was divided. Nara Narayan was obliged to cede a portion of Kamarupa to his nephew, Raghudeva. The two parts of the kingdom were known as Kooch Bihar and Koch Hajo respectively. The partition led to a perpetual hostility between them with the result that their neighbours, the Ahoms and the Muslims, intervened. In 1639 the western portion of Kamarupa came under the supremacy of the Muslims and the eastern portion under that of the Ahoms.

In or about 1215 Assam passed under the sway of a section of the Ahoms who belonged to the Shan tribe. The dynasty thus established ruled over that province for six hundred years. In their prosperous days the Ahoms successfully prevented Kamarupa and Bangal from extending eastward; but when they conquered Kamarupa and made it a part of their kingdom, they became exposed to attacks from the Sultans of Bangal. Ala-ud-din Husain led an expedition into Assam, but he failed to conquer it. The result was enmity between the Ahoms and the Sultans of Bangal which lasted for more than thirty years. After the Sultan of Bangal had failed against the Ahoms, some local Muhammadans in Assam raised the

standard of rebellion, but they, too, could not establish Muslim supremacy there. Assam and Kamarupa, thus, continued to be under the rule of the Ahoms throughout the period of the Sultanate of Delhi.

Rajasthan

There were three important independent States in Rajasthan during this period. They were Mewar (modern Udaipur), Marwar and Amber.

Mewar. The history of Mewar goes back to far off antiquity. According to Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha, the rule of the Sisodia Guhilot family over Chittor can be traced to the 6th century A.D. Scientific research has shown that Guhilot Rajputs were the rulers of Mewar at least in the 7th century A.D. Ala-ud-din Khalji captured Chittor, the capital of Mewar, in 1303; but a portion of the State remained in the hands of the Guhilots. The capital, too, was recovered by Rana Hamir who retrieved the honour of his race and died in 1364. He was succeeded by Kshetra Singh who was the worthy son of a worthy father. He was killed in a family quarrel about 1382. Then came his son, Lakha, and, after him, Mokala who was assassinated in 1431. Mokala's successor was the famous Rana Kumbha Karan. He was one of the greatest rulers of Mewar and one of the most famous and successful sovereigns in the entire country. He was a brave soldier and first-rate general. Having increased his army and fortified his frontiers by building numerous forts, among which Kumbhalgarh is the most famous, he carried on an incessant warfare against the Sultans of Malwa and Gujarat. He built the Tower of Victory or Vijaya Stambha at Chittor in commemmoration of his success against Malwa. Rana Kumbha was a great patron of learning and was himself a scholar of no mean ability. Mewar reached the zenith of its glory under Rana Sanga (1509-28) who has been described as 'the fragment of a soldier' having the marks of eighty wounds on his body from sword or lance and being crippled in one leg, one eye and one arm. Sanga was endowed with remarkable military ability. He fought successfully against Malwa, Delhi and Gujarat. His supremacy was recognised by the rulers of the other Rajput states in Rajasthan. He defeated and captured Mahmud II of Malwa and generously restored his kingdom to him. He came into conflict with Babur and was defeated in a battle with him at Khanua in 1527. But Babur shrank from the task of conquering

Mewar. Akbar, too, failed to annex it. Mewar recognised the Mughul suzerainty in the time of Jahangir.

Marwar. The next important state in Rajasthan was Marwar, known in our day as Jodhpur. It was ruled over by the Rathors who descended from the ancient Rashtrakutas. The modern history of Marwar dates from the time of Chunda who ruled from 1394 to 1421. His successor was the famous Jodha who built the fort of Jodhpur, founded a town there and made it his capital. He built another important fort, namely, that of Mandor. His reign lasted for about fifty years, from 1438 to 1488. One of his sons, named Bika, founded the present state of Bikaner about 1464. The most important ruler of Marwar during our period was Maldeva (1532-62) under whom the power of the dynasty reached its height. Maldeva came into conflict with Sher Shah who was obliged to make peace with the Rathor king.

Ambar. The State of Amber, known now-a-days as Jaipur State, was ruled by the Kachhawaha Rajputs who belonged to the solar dynasty and traced their descent from Shri Ram Chandra of Ayodhya. The State of Amber was founded, according to Colonel James Tod, in the 10th century A.D. In the early days of its history, it seems to have been under the suzerainty of Mewar. It acquired some political importance in the 14th century. But during the Mughul age, Amber became the first state in Rajasthan. Its ruler, Bharmal, recognised the overlordship of Akbar in 1561.

THE SOUTHERN INDIA

Khandesh

Situated in the valley of the river Tapti, Khandesh was a province of the Sultanate of Delhi till the end of Firoz Tughluq's reign. Its last governor, Malik Raja Faruqi, who was appointed by Firoz Tughluq, set himself up as an independent ruler during the period of confusion following Firoz's death. He came into clash with Muzaffar Shah I of Gujarat, but was defeated by him. He was reputed to be a kind-hearted ruler. He died on 29th April, 1399, and was succeeded by his son, Malik Nasir. He defeated his brother, Hasan, and captured the fortress of Asirgarh from its Hindu chieftain. He was, however, compelled to acknowledge the suzerainty of Ahmad Shah of Gujarat. He also suffered defeat in a battle with

Ala-ud-din Ahmad of the Bahamani kingdom. After his death, which occurred in 1438, there were, one after another, two weak Sultans. In 1457 the throne of Khandesh passed to Adil Khan II who was an able and enterprising king. He brought Gondwana under his possession and reformed the administration of his kingdom. He died in 1501 and was succeeded by his brother, Daud. This ruler died in 1508. Then his son, Ghazi Khan, came to the throne, but he was poisoned within ten days of his accession. There ensued a period of confusion in Khandesh and its neighbours, the Sultans of Gulbarga and Gujarat, endeavoured to fish in troubled waters at its expense. Eventually, Adil Khan I became king of Khandesh. He was a nominee of Mahmud Begarha of Gujarat who acquired considerable influence in the internal affairs of Khandesh. Adil died in 1520. His successors were as weak as he himself was. They could not save the kingdom from the encroachments of the neighbouring rulers. Khandesh was annexed by Akbar in 1601.

The Bahamani kingdom

During the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq some of the Dakhin nobles rose in rebellion against his oppressive policy, seized the city of Daultabad and proclaimed one of themselves, named Ismail Mukh, king under the title of Nasir-ud-din Shah. Being a man of advanced age and unfit to be the ruler of a new kingdom which needed greater ability and exertion than that he could command, Nasir-ud-din resigned the throne. The nobles now chose Hasan who became king under the title of Abul Muzaffar Ala-ud-din Bahaman Shah on the 3rd August, 1347. The story, related by Farishta, that Hasan was in his early days the menial servant of a Brahman, named Gangoo, who treated him well and prophesied his rise to power, whence in gratitude he assumed the title of Bahamani, has been rejected by modern research as gossip. Hasan claimed descent from the famous Persian hero Bahaman, son of Isfandiyar, and that was why he took up the title of Bahaman Shah, and not from the name of his so-called Brahman master and benefactor.

Hasan proved to be a powerful ruler. He was determined to extend the boundaries of his small principality. As the result of incessant warfare, he succeeded in extending its limits from the Wainganga river in the north to the Krishna in the south, and from Daultabad in the west to Bhongir in the east. He established an efficient administration at his capital, Gulbarga, and divided his kingdom into

four provinces (*tarafs*), namely, Gulbarga, Daultabad, Barar and Bidar. Each province was under a governor who had an army and appointed his civil and military officers. Hasan died on 11th February, 1358. He was just to his co-religionists and a propagator of Islam. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Muhammad Shah I (1358-77). To this ruler belongs the credit of organising the administration of the new kingdom on a sound basis. His foreign policy was marked by hostility to the Hindu kingdoms of Vijayanagar and Warangal with whom he fought almost throughout his reign. He defeated the rulers of these States and compelled them to yield a huge war indemnity. Muhammad was fond of wine and other pleasures. He died in 1371. His son, Mujahid Shah, now became ruler. He continued his father's policy of waging war against Vijayanagar. He besieged that city, but failed to capture it, made peace and returned to Gulbarga. A conspiracy was formed against his life as the result of which the throne passed to one of his near relatives, named Daud Khan. Daud himself was murdered in May, 1378. The nobles now raised Muhammad Shah, a grandson of Hasan, to the throne who ruled from 1378 to 1397. He was a man of peace-loving disposition and a patron of scholars. He built mosques and gathered men of learning at his court. His reign was marked by a period of peace with Vijayanagar. The last days of this monarch were embittered by intrigues of his sons who aspired to the throne. He died in April, 1397. Then followed two weak rulers whose reigns lasted for a few months each. In November, 1397, Firoz, a grandson of Hasan, seized the throne and assumed the title of Taj-ud-din Firoz Shah. His reign lasted from 1397 to 1422. He was a brave ruler and was fond of the society of shaikhs and learned men. At the same time, he was addicted to sensual pleasures and was a narrow-minded Muslim. He took up the threads of the foreign policy from his predecessors and fought three wars with Vijayanagar, the first two of which were successful. In the last war he was defeated. He fled in confusion, but was pursued. The Vijayanagar troops obtained possession of the southern and eastern districts of the Bahamani kingdom. Firoz felt humiliated and neglected his administration. After this defeat he was deposed by his brother, Ahmad, in 1422.

The reign of Ahmad Shah (1422-35) is famous, for it was marked by two important events. Firstly, he transferred his capital

from Gulbarga to Bidar which had a better situation and more salubrious climate. Secondly, the rivalry between the parties at his court, namely, the Dakhin party and the foreign party, became accentuated. The Dakhin party consisted of local Muslim nobles and was supported by the Africans who did not enjoy high posts in the kingdom. The other party, known as the foreign party, consisted of the Turks, the Persians, the Arabs and held important places at the court and in the provinces. The Dakhinis were jealous of them. Moreover, religious differences added to the political rivalry. The Dakhinis were Sunnis, while the foreigners were mostly Shias. Owing to the dissension at court the administration was much weakened. Ahmad Shah, nevertheless, pursued a vigorous foreign policy. In order to avenge the losses of his brother's time, he attacked and besieged Vijayanagar. The raja was reduced to great distress and had to pay a huge indemnity. In 1424-25 Ahmad conquered Warangal and slew its ruler. The independent kingdom of Warangal, thus, came to an end. Next, Ahmad defeated Husang Shah of Malwa and inflicted great loss on him. He fought with Gujarat, too, but did not succeed. His last achievement was the victory against the chiefs of Konkan. He died in 1435.

He was succeeded by his son, Ala-ud-din II (1435-54). Ala-ud-din suppressed his brother's (Muhammad's) rebellion and appointed him governor of the Raichur Doab where he remained loyal till the end of his life. Having overcome domestic dissension, he undertook an expedition against Konkan and reduced its chiefs to submission. He compelled the raja of Sangameshwar to give his daughter in marriage to him. Nasir Khan of Khandesh, his father-in-law, took up the cause of his daughter and invaded Barar, but was defeated. Ala-ud-din engaged himself in the traditional warfare with Vijaya-nagar and acquired huge booty and compelled the raja to give him tribute. Ala-ud-din founded a hospital which was handsomely endowed. He died in 1457. His successor was his eldest son, Humayun, who ruled from 1457 to 1461. He was a tyrant and was known as *zalim*. He died in 1461. Then came to the throne Nizam Shah, a minor son of Humayun. The queen mother, Maqdum-i-Jahan, became the regent. Taking advantage of the minority of the ruler, the rulers of Orissa and Telingana invaded the Bahamani kingdom, but they were repelled. Then Mahmud Khalji of Malwa came on the scene. He invaded Nizam Shah's country; but owing

to the intervention of Mahmud Begarha of Gujarat, he had to retire. The boy king died in 1463, and was succeeded by his brother, named Muhammad. He assumed the title of Muhammad Shah III (1563-82). Like other rulers of his dynasty, he was fond of drink and debauchery. The administration was carried on by his famous minister, Mahmud Gawan, who was given the title of Khwaja Jahan. This prime minister served the Bahamani kingdom with devotion and loyalty. He undertook a number of successful military operations and extended the boundaries of his master's kingdom. His first work was to subdue the Hindu rajas of Konkan. He captured several forts. He compelled the raja of Sangameshwar to surrender the fortress of Khalna. He also conquered Goa which was one of the best parts of the Vijayanagar empire. One of his assistants seized the forts of Rajamundry and Kondavir. The most important military campaign was, however, against Vijayanagar. The raja was defeated and an immense booty fell into the hands of the victors. An expedition was undertaken against Orissa, from where a large booty, including some elephants, was brought to Bidar. But the Bahamani kingdom suffered from a terrible famine for want of rains, which lasted for two years. This calamity was followed by another, namely, the assassination of the prime minister, Mahmud Gawan. Muhammad Shah III, in his drunken mood, ordered the prime minister to be put to death, at the instigation of the Dakhini nobles who were jealous of his power and influence. They produced a forged letter before the Sultan and made him believe that Mahmud Gawan was in treasonable correspondence with the ruler of Vijayanagar. Mahmud Gawan was put to death on 5th April, 1481. This prime minister was a foreigner and had served the Bahamani kingdom during three successive reigns with ability and loyalty. He was a learned scholar and was fond of the society of learned men. He built a magnificent college at Bidar where he had collected a large number of extremely valuable books. His private life was simple and free from defects; but, like other high-placed nobles of his time, he was religious bigot and persecuted the Hindus and their religion. With his death "departed all the cohesion and power of the Bahamani kingdom." The administration became weak. The drunken Sultan, Muhammad III, followed his prime minister and died on 22nd March, 1482.

He was succeeded by Mahmud Shah, his younger son, who was

devoid of ability and character. The quarrel between the Dakhini and the foreign nobles continued. Rival nobles and governors cared for their own interests as against the interests of the State. They seized power and asserted their independence. The kingdom was reduced in size and Mahmud's authority remained confined to a small area around the capital. On Mahmud's death he had three successors, one after another, who, like him, were mere puppets in the hands of Qasim Barid-ul-mamalik and, after his death, in those of his son, Amir Ali Barid. The last ruler of this dynasty was Kalimullah Shah. With his death, in 1527, the Bahamani kingdom came to an end. On its ruins sprang five independent kingdoms. They were : (1) The Adilshahi kingdom of Bijapur, (2) The Nizamshahi kingdom of Ahmadnagar, (3) The Imadshahi kingdom of Barar, (4) The Qutubshahi kingdom of Golkunda, and (5) The Baridshahi kingdom of Bidar.

The Bahamani kingdom lasted for over a hundred and seventy-five years during which period the dynasty had eighteen kings. The history of the kingdom is full of intrigues, civil wars and constant struggle with its neighbours. Of the eighteen kings of the dynasty, five were murdered, three were deposed, two were blinded and two died of intemperance. We are told by a Russian traveller, named Athanasius Nikitin, who visited the Bahamani kingdom in 1417, that the country was populous, but the mass of the people were very poor. The nobles, on the other hand, were extremely rich and lived in luxury. Whenever a nobleman went out he was preceded by twenty horsemen and followed by three hundred soldiers on horseback and five hundred on foot and by a number of other people, such as, torch-bearers and musicians. But the lot of the common people was miserable.

The five kingdoms of the Dakhin

Bijapur. The most important of the States which arose on the ruins of the Bahamani kingdom was Bijapur. It was founded by Yusuf Adil Shah and is, therefore, known as the Adilshahi kingdom of Bijapur. In his early days, he was known as a Georgian slave who was purchased by Mahmud Gawan. But, according to Farishta, he was the second son of Sultan Murad II of Turkey from where he had fled to save himself from his elder brother. Be that as it may, Yusuf Adil Khan was possessed of great ability and strength of character and rose to prominence in the service of Mahmud Gawan.

When he set himself up as an independent king of Bijapur in 1489-90, he proved to be a just and vigorous ruler. Though he had some preference for the Shia sect, he granted toleration to all his subjects and employing Hindus in government service. His administration was marked by justice and humanity, and his court was thronged by scholars from Persia, Turkistan and other Central Asian countries. His four immediate successors were not as able as he, and their reigns were marked by intrigues and war. The sixth ruler, Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1579-1626), was a tolerant and wise king. According to Meadows Taylor, "He was the greatest of all the kings of the Adilshahi dynasty and, in most respects, except its founder, the most able and popular." He annexed the kingdom of Bidar to Bijapur in 1618-19. Bijapur now came into contact with the Mughul Emperor Shah Jahan in the time of his successor, Mahmud Adil Shah. It was annexed by Aurangzeb in 1686.

Golkunda. Golkunda comprised the old Hindu kingdom of Warangal. Its founder was Qutub Shah, a Turki officer of the Bahamani kingdom. During the reign of Mahmud Shah Bahamani he was the governor of Telingana. He declared his independence in 1512 or 1513. He ruled upto 1543 and was succeeded by his son, Jamshid. During the reign of its third king, Ibrahim, Golkunda came into conflict with Vijayanagar. After Ibrahim's death the administration of Golkunda fell into decay owing to the weakness of its later rulers. It was annexed by Aurangzeb in 1687.

Ahmadnagar. The kingdom of Ahmadnagar was founded by Malik Ahmad whose father, Nizam-ul-mulk Bahri, was a converted Hindu and prime minister of the Bahamani kingdom. In 1490 Malik Ahmad, who was governor of Junar, declared himself independent. He founded the city of Ahmadnagar and transferred his capital to that place. He captured Daultabad in 1499. He died in 1508 and was succeeded by his son, Burhan-i-Nizam Shah. The third ruler of the dynasty, Husain Shah, joined the Muslim confederacy against Vijayanagar in 1565. The later rulers of this kingdom were weak. The kingdom was over-run and its ruler defeated by Akbar in 1600 and compelled to become a vassal. It was finally annexed to the Mughul empire in 1636.

Bidar. After the governors of the Bahamani kingdom had become independent, a small portion of it survived It was held by the Barids. In 1526 or 1527 Amir Ali Barid removed the puppet

Bahamani Sultan and set himself up as an independent ruler of Bidar. His dynasty became known as the Baridshahi dynasty of Bidar. In 1618-19 it was annexed by Bijapur.

Barar. The founder of this kingdom was Fateh-ullah Imad Shah who asserted his independence in 1490. The kingdom became known from his title as the Imadshahi kingdom of Barar. It was conquered and annexed by Ahmadnagar in 1574.

Of the above five kingdoms, two, namely Bijapur and Golkunda, produced some good rulers. All the five states had a long quarrel with the Hindu empire of Vijayanagar. Ultimately, they combined together and defeated the ruler of Vijayanagar at Talikota in 1565. They quarrelled among themselves also and hampered peace and prosperity in the Dakhin.

The Vijayanagar Empire

Origin. The empire of Vijayanagar came into existence during the confusion of Muhammad bin Tughluq's reign. There are several theories about its origin and the controversy has not as yet come to an end. It is, however, definite that the empire was founded in 1336 by Harihara and Bukka, two of the five sons of Sangama, who were originally in the service of the Hoysala king, Vir Ballala III, and were responsible for organising resistance against the encroachment of the Sultan of Delhi. The city of Anegundi, on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra, which formed the nucleus of the empire, was probably founded by Vir Ballala III about the year 1336. On the death of Vir Ballala III's son and successor, Virupaksha Ballala, in 1346, Harihara and Bukka found themselves in possession of the territory that had belonged to the Hoysala kingdom. They made Vijayanagar, on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra, their capital. The town, probably, owes its birth to Vir Ballala III; but, after it was made the seat of a new government, it must have been greatly improved by Harihara and Bukka. The founders seem to have been greatly inspired and aided by the celebrated scholar and saint, Madhava Vidyaranya and his equally famous brother, Sayana, a commentator of the holy *Vedas*.

The Sangama dynasty. The founders, Harihara and Bukka, belonged to the Sangama dynasty, so-called from their father, Sangama. Harihara I did not assume full imperial title and his brother, Bukka, who followed him, also refrained from doing so. Harihara and his brother brought under their control almost the whole of the

territory that had formerly belonged to the Hoysala kingdom. Bukka sent a mission to China in 1374. He died in 1379 and was succeeded by his son, Harihara II. The new ruler assumed the imperial titles of Maharajadhiraj and Raja Parameshwara, etc. He was a great fighter and conqueror and extended his authority over Kanara, Mysore, Trichinopoly, Kanchi and Chingleput regions. During his reign his son, Bukka II, made an attempt to capture by force the Raichur Doab, situated between the Krishna and the Tungabhadra rivers and forming the bone of contention between the Vijayanagar empire and the Bahamani kingdom. He was defeated by Firoz Shah Bahamani. Though a worshipper of Shiva, Harihara II was tolerant towards other religions. He died in 1406 and was succeeded by his son, Deva Raya I. During his reign there were wars with the Bahamani kingdom. He died in 1422. The next king was Vijaya Bukka or Vir Vijaya who reigned for a few months. Then came Deva Raya II who reorganised the administration and placed his army on a sound footing. He appointed an officer to look after the overseas commerce. During his reign Vijayanagar was visited by two foreign travellers, Nicolo Conti, an Italian, and Abdur Razzaq, a Persian, who had left graphic descriptions of the city and the empire. The empire now included the whole of southern India and touched the shores of Ceylon. Deva Raya II died in 1446. His successors were weak. There were rebellions and foreign invasions. The Bahamani Sultan and the ruler of Orissa threatened the eastern provinces. The invaders were, however, successfully repelled by Narasinha, a powerful chieftain of Chandragiri (Chittur district). This chief deposed Virupaksha II, the last ruler of the Sangama dynasty, and seized the throne in about 1486.

The Saluva dynasty. After this episode, which is known as the First Usurpation in the history of the Vijayanagar empire, Narasinha Saluva laid the foundation of a new dynasty, known as the Saluva dynasty. Narasinha ruled for six years. He was an able and popular ruler. He fought for, and recovered, most of the districts occupied by the Bahamani Sultans and the king of Orissa. He was succeeded by his two sons, one after the other, who proved to be worthless princes. During their reigns the power was wielded by Narasa Nayaka who was the commander of the army. When Narasa died in 1505, his ambitious son, Vira Narasinha, deposed Narasinha's worthless son and set himself up as king. This is called the Second Usurpation.

The Taluva dynasty. Vira Narasinha laid the foundation of a new dynasty, which is known as the Taluva dynasty. He seems to have been a fairly successful ruler. He ruled from 1505 to 1509, and, after his death, was succeeded by his younger brother, Krishnadeva Raya (1509-30). Krishnadeva Raya was the greatest king of Vijayanagar and one of the greatest in the entire history of India. A great soldier and general, he waged many wars in all of which he was successful. First of all, he subdued his refractory vassals and reduced them to submission. Next, he obtained possession of the Raichur Doab. Then he turned his attention towards his hostile neighbours. In 1513 he defeated Gajapati Prataprudra, the king of Orissa and recovered from him those portions of the Vijayanagar territory which the latter had wrested during the reigns of his weak predecessors. In 1514 he captured the fortress of Udayagiri and made an uncle and an aunt of the raja of Orissa prisoners. Next, he acquired the fortress of Kondavidu and, thereafter, Kondapalli was acquired. In these campaigns the wife and three sons of the raja of Orissa were taken prisoners. They were treated with courtesy and consideration. After his success against Orissa, Krishnadeva Raya turned against the Sultan of Bijapur whom he defeated in March, 1520. He ravaged Bijapur territory and razed the fortress of Gulbarga to the ground. He was, thus, successful in humbling the pride of his hostile neighbours. The result of his military expeditions was that his authority now extended as far as south Konkan in the west, Vizagapattam in the east and the extremity of the Indian peninsula in the south. Some islands in the Indian Ocean, also, seem to have acknowledged his suzerainty. The power and prestige of the Vijayanagar kingdom reached its zenith under this ruler.

Krishnadeva Raya was an equally great administrator. He reorganised the administration of the empire. Himself an accomplished scholar, he was a generous patron of learning. He was also noted "for his religious zeal and catholicity". Though a follower of Vaishnavism, he respected and tolerated all other religions. He maintained friendly relations with the Portuguese governor Albuquerque and granted him permission to build a fort at Bhatkal. He died in 1529 or 1530. By the unanimous testimony of foreign and Indian writers, Krishnadeva Raya was one of the most remarkable kings that ever ruled in any part of the world. The Portuguese traveller, Domingos Paes, writes : "He is the most learned and perfect king that could

possibly be, cheerful of disposition and very merry; he is one that seeks to honour foreigners and receives them kindly, asking all about their affairs whatever their condition may be. He is a great ruler and a man of much justice, but subject to certain fits of rage...He is by rank a greater lord than any, by reason of what he possesses in armies and territories; but it seems that he has, in fact, nothing, compared to what a man like him ought to have, so gallant and perfect is he in all things."

Battle of Talikota, 1565. Krishnadeva Raya was succeeded by his brother, Achyuta Raya (1530-42). But this prince was a weak ruler. During his time, rival political groups came into existence. The central authority was, therefore, weakened. On his death the throne passed to his nephew, Sadasiva; but the power was in the hands of his famous minister, Rama Raya. Rama Raya was an able administrator. But he was ambitious and tactless. He interfered in the quarrels of the Muslim Sultans of the Dakhin, thinking that this policy would lead to the restoration of the power and prestige of the Vijayanagar empire. In 1543 he entered into an alliance with Ahmadnagar and Golkunda against Bijapur. A few years later, he joined Bijapur and Golkunda against Ahmadnagar. A joint invasion of Ahmadnagar was undertaken. The Vijayanagar army ravaged the enemy territory and is said to have destroyed mosques and disrespected the *Quran*. This insult to Islam, which must have been highly exaggerated by the parties concerned, brought about an alliance among the Sultans of the Dakhin. The combined armies of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, Golkunda and Bidar invaded Vijayanagar and inflicted upon her a defeat on the field of Talikota on 23rd January, 1565. Rama Raya, the prime minister, fought well; but he was captured and put to death by the Sultan of Ahmadnagar with his own hands. The victors acquired a huge booty consisting of jewels, tents, arms and cash, besides horses and slaves. They now proceeded to the city of Vijayanagar and destroyed it mercilessly. In the words of Sewell, the author of *A Forgotten Empire* : "Never perhaps in the history of the world has such havoc been brought and wrought so suddenly on so splendid a city....."

Though the battle of Talikota crippled the Vijayanagar empire, it could not blot it out of existence. After their victory there arose mutual jealousy among the four Sultans which prevented them from combining together to put an end to the Vijayanagar empire. Their

jealousy enabled Vijayanagar to recover a part of its territory and power.

The Aravidu dynasty. After the battle of Talikota, Rama Raya's brother, Tirumala, transferred the capital to Penugonda. He succeeded in restoring a part of the power and prestige of the empire. He was an ambitious man and, in 1570, he deposed king Sadasiva and seized the throne. He laid the foundation of the Aravidu dynasty. He was succeeded by his son, Ranga II, who was a successful ruler. Then came his brother, Venkata II, to the throne who ruled from 1586 to 1614. During his time the disintegration of the kingdom set in and the king committed the mistake of recognising the complete autonomy of the kingdom of Mysore which was founded by Raja Oedyar in 1612. He transferred the capital to Chandragiri. On his death, in 1614, there was a war of succession and the result was the disruption of the kingdom. The last important ruler of this dynasty was Ranga III. He was powerless to reduce the refractory vassals to submission and to resist the aggression of the Sultan of Bijapur and Golkunda. The empire came to an end after subordinate officers, like the chiefs of Sringapattam and Bednur and the nayaks of Madura and Tanjore, had declared their independence.

The administration of Vijayanagar

Central Government. The king of Vijayanagar empire was the fountainhead of all power in the State; but he was an enlightened despot. Though he was the supreme civil, military and judicial authority, he was not a tyrant or even an irresponsible despot. He governed the empire according to *dharma* and had always the interests of the kingdom and the welfare of the people at heart. The ideal of kingship of Krishnadeva Raya, who was the most important king of the dynasty, was like that of Frederick the Great of Prussia. "A crowned king," writes he, in one of his books entitled *Amuktamalyada* (in Telugu), "should always rule with an eye towards *dharma*." He goes on to say : "A king who should rule, collecting round him people skilled in statecraft, should investigate the mines yielding precious metals in his kingdom, and extract the same and levy taxes from his people moderately, should counteract the acts of his enemies by crushing them with force, should be friendly, should protect one and all of his subjects, should put an end to the mixing up of the castes among them, should always try to increase the merit of the Brahmans, should strengthen his fortress and lessen the growth of the

undesirable things and should be ever mindful of the purification of his cities....."

There was a council of ministers to assist the king in the work of administration. We do not know their exact number; but, for a big kingdom like Vijayanagar, there must have been six to eight ministers. They were appointed and dismissed by the king and held their posts at the king's pleasure. The ministers were from the Brahmana, Kshatriya and Vaishya castes. Sometimes the office of a minister was hereditary; but this was not so in all cases. There was a secretariat. Besides the ministers, there were other officers holding lower ranks, such as, the chief treasurer, officer in charge of jewels, officer in charge of commerce, the prefect of the police, the master of the horse, and so on. The household department of the king, too, was well organised. The court was thronged by nobles, priests, astrologers, musicians, scholars and poets. The splendour of the court, on which the ruler spent a huge sum, was considered an object of wonder to foreign diplomats and travellers.

Provincial government. The Vijayanagar empire was divided into six provinces. Some writers, who base their conclusion on the statement of Domingos Paes, wrongly hold that there were two hundred provinces in the empire. The mistake is, probably, due to Paes's confounding the tributary vassals with the provincial governors. Each province was under a governor called *naik* who was either a member of the royal family or an influential noble. The governor exercised civil, military and judicial powers within his province. He had, however, to furnish an account of the income and expenditure of his province to the central government. He was also required to send military assistance in time of need. The governors, though controlled by the king if he happened to be a man of strong personality, enjoyed wide powers within their jurisdictions.

Local administration. The provinces were divided into districts which were further sub-divided into smaller units. The lowest unit of administration was the village which was self-sufficient. There was a village assembly, like the *panchayat* of northern India, in every village. It carried on the administration of the village through its hereditary officers, such as the village accountant, the village weightsman, the village watchman and the village officer in charge of forced labour. These officers were paid by grants of land or by a portion of agricultural produce. The central administration

maintained contact with the village through an officer, called *Mahanayakacharya*, who had a kind of supervisory authority over the administration of the village.

Finance. The mainstay of the government was the land revenue. There was a separate land revenue department. For the purpose of assessment, the land was classified as wet land, dry land and orchards and woods. The State demand during Hindu times was generally one-sixth of the produce; but the kings of Vijayanagar seem to have charged a little more than one-sixth, as they had to maintain a huge army to protect the kingdom from the perpetual hostility of the Bahmani Sultans. Besides the land tax, the government levied the grazing tax, the marriage tax, the customs duty and a tax on gardening and manufactures of various articles. The taxation was rather high; but there was no extortion. The taxes were realised both in cash and in kind.

Army. The empire maintained a huge army, the strength of which varied from time to time. Under Krishnadeva Raya the State army consisted of 3,600 horse, seven lakh foot and 651 elephants. There was an artillery department; but the artillery must have been rather crude. The military establishment was under the management of the commander-in-chief who was assisted by a number of subordinate officials. But the organisation and discipline of the Vijayanagar army seems to have been inferior to those of the Muslim Sultans of the Dakhin.

Justice. The king was the fountainhead of justice and decided cases. There were also regular courts. The judges were appointed by the king. The village people had their cases decided by their own village assembly or *panchayat*. In some cases disputes were settled by the judges with the help of the local bodies. The law administered in the court was that which had come down from the past and was based on traditional regulations and customs and constitutional usage of the country. Criminal law was severe. Theft, adultery and treason to the State were punished with death or mutilation. For ordinary offences the punishment was fine or confiscation of property or ordeal.

Religious toleration. The Vijayanagar kings were deeply religious people. They were devoted to Vaishnavism. But they tolerated all religions, whether of Indian origin or absolutely foreign. Edoardo Barbosa writes : "The king allows such freedom that every

man may come and go and live according to his own creed without suffering any annoyance and without enquiry whether he is a Christian, a Jew, a Moor or a Hindu."

Defects of Vijayanagar administration. On the whole the administration was elaborately organised and just. It suffered, however, from a few defects, the most glaring of which was the great power enjoyed by the provincial governors which, subsequently, proved to be the cause of the disruption of the empire. Secondly, the army organisation was not as efficient as it should have been specially as Vijayanagar had to fight almost a continuous war against the Bahamani Sultans. Thirdly, the rulers committed the mistake of allowing the Portuguese to settle on their western coast for the sake of commercial profit. Fourthly, the individualistic tendency of the people was not curbed. Finally, the rulers "failed to develop a sustained commercial activity inspite of various facilities."

The social life. We get a clear picture of the life of the people from the writings of foreign travellers. Society seems to have been well organised. Women occupied a high position and took an active part in political, social and literary life of the empire. They were trained in wrestling, in the use of various weapons of offence and defence, in music and in fine arts. Some of them received literary education of a high order. This presupposes some kind of general female education. Nuniz writes that the king had women wrestlers, astrologers and soothsayers, besides women accountants, women clerks and women guards. Of course, in music and dancing and other fine arts they excelled men. There were some women judges, too. Polygamy was recognised and was practised by the wealthy people. Child marriage was common. Among the rich people dowry was practised on a large scale. Widows committed *sati* on funeral pyres of their husbands. The Brahmans exercised great influence in the society. They were important not only in social and religious matters, but also in administrative and political affairs. Except for the Brahmans, there was no restriction in matters of diet. The kings and the general public were meat-eaters and they ate all kinds of animal food except the flesh of oxen or cows. Animal sacrifices were common. Buffaloes and sheep were sacrificed on the occasion of important festivals.

Art and literature. The empire of Vijayanagar had high cultural and artistic achievements to its credit. We have already

seen that Krishnadeva Raya was a profound scholar and a generous patron of literature. Other kings, too, were fond of learning and were surrounded by great scholars and poets. They encouraged Sanskrit, Telugu, Tamil and Kannada languages and literatures. Such notable scholars as Sayana, the well-known commentator of the *Vedas*, and his brother, Madhava Vidyaranya, flourished in the early days of the Vijayanagar rule. Under Krishnadeva Raya literary activity reached its zenith. There were great poets, philosophers and religious teachers at his court. They were generously rewarded by grants of money and land. The king himself was a scholar and author of note. The tradition passed on and was continued by his successors. The example of the kings was followed by the members of the ruling family and by the nobles and other well-to-do people. Many works on music, dancing, drama, grammar, logic, philosophy and other branches of knowledge were produced. Art and architecture were not neglected. Temples of remarkable beauty were constructed by the kings. Krishnadeva Raya built the famous Hazara temple which, in the opinion of an art critic, is "one of the most perfect specimens of Hindu temple architecture in existence." The Vitthalaswami temple is another example of the excellent architecture produced by the Vijayanagar kings. Painting was also patronised. Music, too, was greatly encouraged. Theatre was not forgotten. In short, the history of the Vijayanagar empire was marked by an outburst of great literary and artistic activity. In the opinion of a scholar the empire brought about a 'synthesis of south Indian culture'.

The economic condition. The empire of Vijayanagar was one of the richest states then known to the world. Several foreign travellers, who visited our country during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, have left glowing accounts of its splendour and wealth. The Italian traveller, Nicolo Conti, who visited Vijayanagar in 1420, writes : "The circumference of the city is sixty miles; its walls are carried upto the mountains and enclose the valley at their foot, so that its extent is thereby increased. In this city there are estimated to be ninety thousand men fit to bear arms....the king is more powerful than all the other kings of India." The Persian diplomat and traveller, Abdur Razzaq, who visited Vijayanagar in 1442-43 remarks : "The country is so well populated that it is impossible, in a reasonable space, to convey an idea of it. In the king's treasure there are

chambers with excavations in them, filled with molten gold forming one mass. All the inhabitants of the country, whether high or low, even down to the artificers of the bazaar, wear jewels and gilt ornaments in their ears and around their necks, arms, wrists and fingers." Portuguese traveller, Domingos Paes, writes: "Its king has much treasure and many soldiers and many elephants.....In this city you will find men belonging to every nation and people, because of the great trade which it has and the many precious stones there, principally diamonds.....This is the best provided city in the world and is stocked with provisions, such as rice, wheat, grains, Indian corn and a certain amount of barley and beans, *moongs*, pulses, horse grain and many other seeds which grow in this country on the food of the people and there is a large store of these, and very cheap.....The streets and markets are full of laden oxen without count..." Barbosa, who came to India in 1516, is equally full of praise and says that the city is "of great extent, highly populous and the seat of an active commerce in country diamonds, rubies from Pegu, silk of China and Alexandria, and cinnabar, camphor, musk, pepper and sandal from Malabar."

From the unanimous testimony of foreign writers it is evident that the empire of Vijayanagar was very rich and prosperous. It was the policy of its rulers to encourage agriculture in the different parts of the empire and to increase agricultural production by a wise irrigation policy. Its agricultural wealth was supplemented by numerous industries, the most important of which were textile, mining and metallurgy. Another important industry was perfumery. Industries and trades were regulated by guilds. It was the common practice of people of the same trade to live in one and the same quarter of the city. There was a great deal of commerce, both inland and overseas. The empire possessed numerous ports and had commercial relations with the islands in the Indian Ocean, the Malay Archipelago, Burma, China, Arabia, Persia, South Africa, Abyssinia and Portugal. The chief articles exported were cloth, rice, iron, saltpetre, sugar and spices. The articles imported into the country were horses, elephants, pearls, copper, coal, mercury, China silks and velvets. For maritime commerce there were ships. Vijayanagar had a small navy of its own and people were acquainted with the art of shipbuilding. For internal transport bullocks, horses, carts and asses were made use of.

The Vijayanagar empire had gold and copper coins. There were some silver coins also. The upper and middle classes of the people were wealthy and were accustomed to a high standard of living. The common people were not devoid of the necessities of life, but they were poor as compared with the upper classes. One chief defect in the economic system of the empire was that the common people had to bear the brunt of taxation. Otherwise, however, they were quite happy. They were much more prosperous than the people in the Bahamani kingdom.

In short, the empire "served a high historical purpose by acting as a champion of Hindu religion and culture against the aggressions of the Muslims in southern India."

18

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SULTANATE

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The Sultanate : a theocracy

The Sultanate of Delhi was a theocracy and not a secular state. Throughout the period the State had its own religion, which was Islam. It did not recognise any other religion, such as Hinduism, the followers of which constituted an overwhelmingly vast majority of the Sultanate's population. The ruling family and dominant ruling class were the followers of this religion and, in strict theory, all the resources of the State were meant for the protection and propagation of the Muslim religion. A modern writer (Dr. I. H. Qureshi) maintains that the Sultanate of Delhi was theocentric and not a theocracy on the ground that "the rule of the ordained priesthood," which is the essential feature of a theocracy, was absent in the Sultanate. This agreement ignores both the letter and the spirit of the Islamic polity. There is no denying the fact—and Dr. Qureshi admits it—that in every Muslim State the canon law is the supreme law; civil law is subordinate to it, and, in fact, it merges its existence in the latter. The Muslim *ulema*, though not ordained and hereditary, were as fanatical and biased as, if not more than, any ordained clergy and insisted on the enforcement of the Quranic law and extirpation of idolatry and heresy. The conduct of the ruling authority in the Sultanate of Delhi was governed by the Quranic injunctions. The Sultan was not only expected to follow this law in his own personal life,[1] but also in the administration. In fact, he was to administer this law, and if, in the opinion of his subjects, he failed to follow it in administering the country, he ceased to be their lawful king. The ideal of the Islamic State in India, therefore, was to convert the entire country to Muslim religion and to destroy the indigenous religions root and branch by turning *dar-ul-harb*

[1] If they could not follow it and drank wine and indulged in other forbidden pursuits it was due to human frailty and not to want of zeal for religion.

(infidel lands) into *dar-ul-Islam* (Muslim lands), and compelling the people therein to embrace the faith of Muhammad.

The Caliph as the nominal sovereign

According to the Islamic theory of sovereignty, there is only one Muslim king of all Muslims wherever they might be living. He is the Caliph or the *Khalifa.* During the heyday of the Caliph's power he used to appoint governors to the various provinces of the Caliphate. Even when a governor set himself up as an independent ruler or a Muslim adventurer conquered any land and became its king, he invariably envoked the sanction of the Khalifa's name, called himself his vassal and received investiture of his office from him, though, in actual practice, he exercised the authority of an independent king. This fiction of the unity of the Khilafat was kept alive even when the Caliphate came to an end and the last Abbasid Khalifa, Mustasim, was put to death by the Mongol leader, Hulagu Khan, in 1558. In conformity with the practice of the age, the Sultans of Delhi styled themselves as the Caliph's deputy or assistant, received investiture from him and had his name inscribed on the coins and read in the *khutba.* The first Sultan of Delhi to make a departure from this practice was Ala-ud-din Khalji. His son, Qutub-ud-din Mubarak, did not believe in the fiction of the Caliphate and actually assumed the title of Khalifa for himself. Barring these two examples, almost all the Sultans of Delhi during our period recognised the nominal sovereignty of the Khalifa. Modern Muslim writers have stretched the point too far in their desire to show that the so-called unity of the so-called Islamic World was a potent reality. The fact, however, is that no Sultan of Delhi ever considered the Khalifa to be his real sovereign. He did not derive power from the nominal Khalifa and was himself the real sovereign of the realm. Nevertheless, as the rulers of this period were foreigners and Muslims, they thought it advantageous to maintain formal relation with the Islamic World outside.

The Sultan

The head of the Sultanate of Delhi was called the Sultan. Sovereignty was supposed to reside in the entire Sunni population of the country, called the *millat.* The Sultan was to be elected by this brotherhood. In actual practice, it was difficult, if not impossible, to get together all the Sunni Musalmans in the country to exercise

their right, and, therefore, the franchise was restricted and became confined to a few notable men and, eventually, to only one man. The right of nomination by the dying king was also recognised. Thus both the methods were resorted to in choosing the Sultan of Delhi. There was no hereditary principle of succession and the office of the Sultan was open, at least in theory, to any *bonafide* Muslim. But, in practice, it was restricted to the immigrant Turks, and then to a still smaller oligarchy and, in the end, to members of the ruling family. In the 15th and 16th centuries, however, the scope was extended and there were rulers of the Arab and Afghan descent.

In strict Islamic theory the true king of a Muslim State is God. The Sultan is His agent and exists to enforce the so-called divine law as expressed in the *Quran*. The Sultan was, thus, the chief executive of the Sultanate of Delhi. He was not only to enforce the law, but he was also its interpreter. In this work he was guided by the *Hadis*, the decisions of the well known jurists and the consensus of opinion of the learned divines, whenever there was a controversy about the interpretation of a particular rule. The Sultan was, also, the highest judicial authority. In fact, he was the fountainhead of justice in the country. Besides, he was the commander of the army. His powers were very wide, indeed. He was a perfect autocrat and his authority was unfettered. The basis of his power was religious and military. As long as he followed the Quranic law, his authority was supreme. There were, however, certain Sultans of Delhi, notably Ala-ud-din Khalji and, for some time, Muhammad bin Tughluq, who defied the Quranic law and yet no one dared to remove them, because they had the support of a powerful army. Thus, even when the Sultan went against the Quranic injunctions, he could not be deposed as long as he was the master of a powerful military establishment. There was no constitutional device to remove an erring king peacefully from the throne. The only way to do it was by a successful rebellion which meant a civil war.

The immensity of the power of the Sultan during our period is clear from the fact that he was not only king of all the people in his dominions, but he was also the religious head of the Muslim section of the population. Thus he was "Caesar and Pope combined in one."

The Sultan was a thorough-going military despot. All power in the State was concentrated in his hands. Inspite of the original

democratic nature of an Islamic State, the government of the Sultan of Delhi had to be a centralized organisation owing to the circumstances. The Sultan had to live and function in the midst of a hostile Hindu population. There were powerful Hindu chiefs who were, naturally, anxious to resist the expansion of the foreign government and even to make a bid for the recovery of their independence. There was danger from outside, too, and the north-western frontier of the Sultanate was almost continuously battered by the Mongol inroads. Under these circumstances, the Sultan had to maintain a large force for defence and to centralize the administration.

The Ministers

There were ministers to assist the Sultan in the work of administration, whose number varied from time to time. During the so-called Slave period, there were four ministers, namely, the *wazir*, the *ariz-i-mamalik*, the *diwan-i-insha* and the *diwan-i-rasalat*. There was, sometimes, the *naib* or *naib-i-mamalik* also whose office was next only to the Sultan and, therefore, superior to that of the *wazir*. The *naib* wielded great authority when the Sultan happened to be weak; but he was only a nominal deputy Sultan in normal times and much inferior to the *wazir*. Subsequently, the *sadr-us-sudur* and *diwan-i-qaza* were raised to the status of ministers. Thus, there were six ministers at Delhi in the heyday of the Sultanate's administration. There was a seventh office which, though not technically a ministership, yet its occupant wielded greater power than most of the ministers. It was that of the comptroller of the royal household.

The Wazir

The prime minister was called the *wazir*. He stood "midway between the sovereign and his subjects." He enjoyed great authority and exercised the powers and prerogatives of the Sultan with some restrictions. He appointed important officers in the name of the Sultan and heard complaints against all officials. He acted for the king when the latter was ill or absent and also when the Sultan was a minor. His next important duty was to keep the Sultan informed of the sentiments and needs of the people and to act as his adviser in the affairs of the government. Besides being in charge of the general administration, he was, particularly, the head of the finance department. In this capacity he was responsible for laying down rules and regulations of revenue settlement and fixing the rates of other taxes

and for controlling the expenditure of the realm. In addition, he had to superintend the civil servants. He controlled the military establishment also, as all the requirements of the military department had to be referred to him. His subordinates kept accounts and disbursed salaries of the military officers and troops. The *wazir* was also in charge of stipends and subsistence allowance to learned men and the poor people. Thus, every branch of public administration came within the *wazir's* purview and every man, from the governor to the menial servant, had directly or indirectly to deal with him. In view of these wide powers, he enjoyed a great prestige and was paid handsomely by assignment of the revenues of a large estate.

The office of the wazir was called *diwan-i-wazarat*. He had an assistant, called *naib-wazir*, who was in charge of this office. Next to the *naib-wazir* was the *mushrif-i-mamalik* (accountant general). Then came the *mustaufi-i-mamalik* or auditor general. The accountant general used to enter the accounts received from the provinces and the various departments, while the auditor general used to audit them. During the reign of Firoz Tughluq, however, a change was introduced. The accountant general dealt with income, while the auditor general with the expenditure. There was a *nazir* to assist the accountant general. The auditor general, too, had assistants. Both had big offices with numerous clerks.

Diwan-i-ariz

The next important minister at the capital was *diwan-i-ariz* or *diwan-i-arz*. He may be called the army minister or the controller general of the military establishment. His main work was to recruit troops and to maintain the descriptive rolls of men and horses and to hold military review in order to inspect the forces. As the Sultan was the commander-in-chief of the army, the *ariz-i-mamalik* was, generally speaking, not required to command the royal troops; but, sometimes, he commanded a part of the army. He particularly looked after their discipline and equipment and their disposition on the field of battle. This department was so important that sometimes the Sultan personally performed some of the duties relating to it. Ala-ud-din Khalji, for instance, was greatly interested in the organisation and upkeep of his military establishment and, hence, paid personal attention to it.

Diwan-i-insha

The *diwan-i-insha* was the third minister. This minister was

in charge of royal correspondence. He was assisted by a number of *dabirs*, that is, able writers who had established their reputation as masters of style. All correspondence, much of which was of a confidential nature, between the Sultan and the rulers of other States and important vassals and officials of the kingdom passed through this department. Important royal orders were drafted in this department and then forwarded for the Sultan's sanction, after which they were copied, registered and despatched. Owing to the confidential nature of the work in his charge, the head of this department was a very trusted official.

Diwan-i-rasalat

The next minister was *diwan-i-rasalat* or *diwan-i-risalat*. There is a difference of opinion regarding the functions of this minister. According to Dr. I. H. Qureshi, he dealt with religious matters and was, also, in charge of grant of stipends to scholars and pious men. Dr. A. B. M. Habibullah, on the other hand, maintains that he was a minister for foreign affairs and was, therefore, in charge of diplomatic correspondence and the ambassadors and envoys sent to and received from foreign rulers. Dr. Habibullah's view seems to be correct, for, apart from the error of interpretation committed by Dr. Qureshi, the theory would have made duplication inevitable, as there was, from the very beginning, an officer in charge of religious affairs, endowments and charity. He was called *sadar-us-sudur*. The *diwan-i-rasalat* was a very important officer, as the Sultans were anxious to maintain diplomatic relations with Central Asian powers besides those in the country.

Sadr-us-sudur

The other two ministers were the *sadr-us-sudur* and the *diwan-i-qaza*. Very often only one minister was appointed to carry on the work of these two departments, that is, the department of religious endowment and charity and the department of justice. The chief *sadr* (*sadr-us-sudur*) was required to enforce Islamic rules and regulations and to see that the Muslims observed them in their daily life and that they said their five daily prayers regularly, kept the fast of Ramzan and so on. He had, also, to disburse a large amount of money in charity and to reward learned Muslim divines and grant subsistence allowance to scholars and men of piety. The chief *qazi*

was the head of the judicial department and had to supervise the administration of justice in the kingdom.

The Majlis-i-khalwat

The ministers were not all of the same rank and status. The *wazir* enjoyed a definitely higher status and privileges. The five other ministers were ministers by courtesy and were, more or less, like secretaries to the Sultan. There was no council of ministers as they were not called to advise the king at one and the same time. As they were appointed and dismissed by the king at will, the advice of any one of them or all of them combined was not binding on the Sultan. Moreover, the king had a large circle of advisers, many of whom were non-officials and they constituted what is known as the *majlis-i-khalwat*. It consisted of the Sultan's personal friends, his trusted officers and some of the notable *ulema*. They were called to give advice to the Sultan from time to time. Their advice, like that of the ministers, was not binding on him. Nevertheless, sometimes they exerted some influence on the administration.

Other departments

Besides the four first-rate ministers and two second-rate ministers (chief *sadr* and the chief *qazi*) there were some other departmental heads at the capital who were entrusted with important duties. They were *barid-i-mamalik* (head of the intelligence and posts department), *diwan-i-amir kohi* or the department of agriculture which was created by Muhammad bin Tughluq, the *diwan-i-mustakhraj* or the department which had to look after and realise arrears from farmers or collectors, and which was established by Ala-ud-din Khalji, *diwan-i-khairat* or the department of charity, instituted by Firoz Tughluq and *diwan-i-istihqak* or the department of pensions.

Controller of royal household

The head of the royal household, though technically in charge of private affairs of the Sultan, wielded considerable influence on the administration. The royal bodyguard and slaves, who were commanded by officers, known as *sar-i-jandar* and *diwan-i-bandagan*, functioned under his supervision. These took part in battles. There were many *karkhanas* or workshops which manufactured articles required by the army and other departments of the State. The royal stables had horses and other animals which were used for transport and war. All these were under the controller of the royal

household. Moreover, he was directly in touch with the Sultan, sometimes even more than the *wazir*. Hence he wielded great authority and enjoyed high prestige.

PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

At no stage in its history was the Sultanate of Delhi divided into homogeneous provinces with uniform administrative system in them. No Sultan of Delhi ever thought of rearranging the distribution of provinces on a uniform basis. During the thirteenth century the Sultanate consisted of military commands which were known as *iqtas*. Each *iqta* was under a *muqti* or a powerful military officer. The number of *iqtas* during the time of so-called Slave kings has been given in the chapter on their administration (12). Ala-ud-din Khalji who conquered practically the whole of the country, including the Dakhin, and who was, otherwise, an original and constructive statesman, allowed big and small provinces to remain as he had found them. Under him, therefore, two kinds of provinces came into existence, namely, the *iqtas* which he had inherited from his predecessors and the new principalities that he conquered. While he retained the old *iqtas*, he appointed military governors to the newly conquered provinces which were, naturally, larger in area and income, as they had been big and flourishing Hindu states before their conquest. Add to them the principalities of the Hindu vassals who, too, were reduced to the position of governors and we have, thus, three kinds of provinces in the Sultanate from the time of Ala-ud-din Khalji. The officer-in-charge of an *iqta* continued to be known as *muqti* as before. Those appointed in charge of the new military provinces were called *walis* and sometimes *amirs*. Obviously, a *walis* enjoyed a higher status and greater authority than a *muqti*. The number of the major provinces varied from time to time. The most important military governorship during the time of the Khaljis and the Tughluqs were Bangal, Gujarat, Jaunpur, Malwa, Khandesh and the Dakhin. Both the *muqtis* and the *walis* were required to keep powerful military establishments in their jurisdictions and to maintain law and order and punish refractory zamindars. They were empowered to appoint subordinate officers and were generally responsible for the entire administration of the areas in their charge. Their power was practically unlimited as long as they obeyed the Sultan and furnished him with military aid in times of need.

They were also required to furnish an account of their income and expenditure and to pay the residue to the central government. The *walis* and the *muqtis* were advised to protect and enforce the Muslim law, to protect the *ulema*, to arrange for the administration of justice, to enforce the decisions of the court, to keep the highways free from robbers and to encourage trade and commerce and material prosperity. Firoz Tughluq advised his son, Fateh Khan, while sending him as governor of Sindh, to protect the peasants from undue exactions and tyranny, to help the learned and the holy, and to protect the people. Inspite of these pious injunctions, the governors, in normal times, enjoyed wide powers and were like petty despots in their respective areas. During the time of weak kings they behaved like *de facto* rulers and exercised unlimited authority. They engaged even in civil wars without the permission of the monarch. It was easy for some of these governors to set themselves up as independent kings during the weak days of Firoz Tughluq's successors.

In each province there was a staff for the collection of revenue. It consisted of *nazirs* and *waqufs*. There was, besides, a higher officer, called *sahib-i-diwan* or *khwaja*. He was probably appointed by the Sultan on the recommendation of the *wazir* and was in charge of keeping accounts and furnishing detailed statements of the same to the central government. According to Dr. Qureshi he was responsible to the Sultan. There were a *qazi* and some other subordinate officers in every province.

LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

During the thirteenth century there was no lower unit of administration than the *iqta*. But with the growth of the Sultanate and the effective suppression of the Hindu chieftains, it was found necessary in the fourteenth century to sub-divide the provinces into *shiqs*. Perhaps this was not done in every province. We know that Muhammad bin Tughluq divided the viceroyalty of the Dakhin into four *shiqs* and that the Doab was divided into *shiqs*. At the head of a *shiq* there was a *shiqdar*. He was, probably, a military officer and his duty was to maintain law and order in his jurisdiction. A little later, a smaller unit of administration than the *shiq* came into existence. It was an aggregate of a number of villages and was called *pargana*. Ibn Buttuta refers to a 'sadi' or a collection of a

hundred villages as an administrative unit. We do not know definitely about the designation and the duties of the officers of the *parganas*. There were a *chaudhari* and a collector of revenue in each *pargana*. The lowest unit was the village which had its own indigenous administration. There was in every village a *panchayat* to settle disputes. The people of the village constituted a small commonwealth and looked after their affairs and arranged for defence, watch and ward, elementary education and sanitation. Normally, they were not interfered with by the Sultan. Every village had then, as now, a *chaukidar* and a revenue officer, called *patwari*.

THE ARMY

As the Sultanate of Delhi was based primarily on force and not on the willing consent of the people, it had to maintain a much larger army than was necessary for the needs of an indigenous national State. During most of the period the army consisted of four classes : (1) regular soldiers permanently employed in the Sultan's service, (2) troops permanently employed in the service of the provincial governors and nobles, (3) recruits particularly employed in times of war and (4) Muslim volunteers enlisted for fighting what was called *jihad* or holy war.

The Sultan's troops at Delhi were called *hashm-i-qalb*. They consisted of two categories of troops, namely, those belonging to the Sultan and those that were in the service of the nobles at Delhi, such as, ministers of the court and other high officials. The troops in royal service were known as *khasah khail* and comprised royal slaves, guards called *jandars* and *afwaj-i-qalb* or the troops directly under royal command. Though these troops were in the permanent employment of the Sultan, they could not be said to have constituted a standing army. Their number was small, and it was not possible for the Sultan to depend upon them entirely in times of danger or war. For the first time in the history of the Sultanate, Ala-ud-din Khalji laid the foundation of a standing army which was directly recruited, paid and officered by the central government. It numbered 4,75,000 horse, besides a vast number of footmen. The institution continued till the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq. Firoz Tughluq converted the army into a feudal organisation. The Lodi army was organised on clannish basis and consisted of tribal hordes of the

Lodis, the Qarmalis, the Lohanis, the Surs, and other Afghan tribes. It was ill-organised and weak.

The contingents of the troops maintained by the nobles and provincial governors were placed at the disposal of *diwan-i-ariz* in times of war. Their organisation, discipline and payment was a matter for the individual governor. There were no uniform rules for their recruitment, training and promotion. The recruits specially employed in the time of war were irregular troops. There was no fixed rule for their payment. Muslim volunteers were encouraged to join the Sultan's army whenever it had to fight with a Hindu ruler. The *maulvis* and the *ulema* were sent round the country to exhort the Muslim population to participate in a holy war against a Hindu chief. The volunteers were not paid from the royal treasury; they were allowed a share of the booty.

The army was not a national army, as it consisted of soldiers of diverse nationalities, such as, the Turks of various tribes, the Tajiks, the Persians, the Mongols, the Afghans, the Arabs, the Abyssinians, the Indian Musalmans and the Hindus. It was a mercenary body which worked for money and whose only bond was the person of the Sultan. Being a heterogeneous body, it was not inspired by national sentiment. But, as most of its members and all its officers were Muslims, it was animated by a feeling of religious solidarity and fanaticism. Inspite of the exaggerated praise lavished on it by Dr. I. H. Qureshi, the army of the Sultans was not a homogeneous, scientifically trained and efficient force like that of Charles VIII of France or of Frederick William I of Prussia.

The army consisted of cavalry, infantry and elephants. The cavalry was the most valued arm and formed the backbone of the military establishment. Each horseman was armed with two swords, a dagger, and a bow and arrows. Sometimes he carried a mace also. The troopers wore coats of mail and the horses were caprisoned with steel. As the value of a trooper depended upon his horse, many a cavalryman had an additional horse. In fact, the cavalry was divided into three grades, namely, (1) the *murattab*, that is, the trooper who had two horses, (2) the *sawar*, that is, the cavalryman with one horse, and (3) the *do-aspa*, that is, a soldier who had a led horse and was not a cavalryman properly so-called. Great care had, of necessity, to be bestowed on the supply of good horses which were imported from Arabia, Turkistan and, sometimes, even from Russia.

The Sultan's stables had many thousands of extra horses ready for service.

The next section of the army was the infantry. The foot-soldiers were called *payaks*. Most of them were the Indian Musalmans, the Hindus and the slaves. They were armed with swords, spears and bows and arrows. The archers were called *dhanuks*, a corruption of the Sanskrit word *dhanush*.

Then there were the elephants which were highly valued by the Sultans. It is said that Balban considered a single elephant as effective in a battle as five hundred horsemen. Muhammad bin Tughluq had 3,000 elephants. Firoz had almost an equal number. The possession of elephants was considered a royal prerogative. Sometimes permission was given to a great noble to keep an elephant which was a rare mark of honour. An elephant carried several armed søldiers who were seated inside a fort-like wooden structure, called *hauda*, placed upon the elephant's back. The elephants were clad in plates of steel and armed with scythes attached to their trunks and tusks. They were trained to fight. There was an officer in charge of elephants, known as *shahna-i-fil*.

There was nothing like modern artillery, but incendiary arrows, javelins and pots full of combustibles were used in battle. Hand grenades, fireworks, rockets and naptha balls were also common. There was a machine for discharging balls by the force of gun powder. Besides, there were *manjaniqs* or *mangonels* and *mangons* (a sort of mechanical artillery) through which fire balls, fire arrows and pieces of stones and rock and even iron balls were thrown. Sometimes poisonous snakes and scorpions were hurled against the enemy. The Sultan maintained a considerable number of boats for the transport of the troops and for use in river battles.

The Sultan was the commander-in-chief of his force. He paid personal attention to its organisation and upkeep. There was, however, an army minister, known as *diwan-i-ariz*, who was in charge of recruitment of troops, their organisation and discipline and promotion. The army seemed to have been organised on decimal basis. A unit of cavalry was formed by ten troopers at whose head there was a *sar-i-khail*. The next rank was that of *sipahsalar* who had ten *sar-i-khails* under him. The third higher rank was that of *amir* who had ten *sipahsalars* under him. The next higher authority was *malik* with ten *amirs* under him, and at the head of ten *maliks* there was a

khan. Probably, this arrangement existed only on paper and was never strictly adhered to during the reign of any of the Sultans of our period. By the time of Balban, most of the offices in the army had become hereditary. Many of the soldiers sent proxies in a battle or at a military review. Ala-ud-din Khalji took steps to do away with corruption by introducing the system of branding (*dagh*) horses so as to prevent a horse from being brought twice at a review or from being substituted by a worthless pony. He also ordered the descriptive roll (*huliya*) of each soldier to be taken and recorded in registers, so that no soldier or officer in his army could send a proxy. These reforms restored discipline in the army. But, in the time of Firoz Tughluq, they were disregarded and soldiers were allowed to send substitutes to the musters. The army continued to be disorganised and ill-disciplined till the time of Sikandar Lodi who insisted on the registration of *huliya* or *chehra* and the branding of the horses.

The central government could be strict about the organisation and discipline of the army at the capital, but, so far as the contingents of the provincial governors were concerned, the centre had little control over them. They were brought to muster once a year, and it was only at that time that the *diwan-i-ariz* could enforce the regulations devised by him.

A part of the army used to be stationed at strategic places in the provinces. Forts on the frontier were garrisoned with seasoned troops. It was the duty of the commandants of the forts to see that there were adequate provisions including fodder for the animals in the forts in their charge.

The Sultans were adept in military strategy. The art of ambushing and surprise attacks were commonly resorted to. Before the army engaged in war, the general or officer-commanding almost invariably surveyed the prospective theatre of war and took geography into account in fixing a battle-field. There was the traditional practice of dividing the army into several divisions on a field of battle. There were, for example, the advance guard, the centre, the right wing, the left wing and the rear guard or reserve. Elephants were stationed in the front. They were preceded by armed infantry. According to Qureshi, there were flanking parties on either flank of an army, which seems to me to be doubtful. There was no flanking party in Ibrahim Lodi's army in the battle of Panipat. Their presence in Babur's army was a main reason of Ibrahim's defeat. Scouts

and sepoys were attached to the army. The duty of the scouts was to reconnoitre and to bring news. They rendered useful service.

The military officers were paid by assignment of land revenue, while the individual troops seem to have been paid in cash. The soldiers' pay varied from time to time. In Ala-ud-din's reign the salary of a well-equipped trooper was 234 *tankas* per annum. Muhammad Tughluq paid him 500 *tankas*. Soldiers were given food, dress and fodder free during the time of a campaign. The salary of the officers, too, varied from time to time. A *khan* was paid one lakh of *tankas* a year, and a *malik* fifty to sixty thousand *tankas* annually. Smaller officers received from one to ten thousand *tankas* a year. These included the pay of the troops under their command. The irregular troops, called *ghair-wajhis*, who were employed for short periods, were, sometimes, paid by an order on some local treasury and sometimes in cash from the central treasury. Firoz Tughluq revived payment by assignment for the soldiers also. The emoluments of the fighting forces were, on the whole, not only adequate, but also handsome.

FINANCE

The fiscal policy of the Sultanate period was based on the theory of finance of the Hanafi school of Sunni jurists. The early Turkish rulers of India had borrowed the system from their Ghaznavide predecessors. The principal sources of revenue as sanctioned by the *shariat* and realised by the Sultans were : (1) *ushr*, (2) *kharaj*, (3) *khams*, (4) *zakat*, and (5) *jizya*. Besides these there were a number of other taxes, such as income from mines and treasure trove, heirless property and customs and excise duties. The *ushr* was a land tax, charged on land held by Muslims and watered by natural means. It was one-tenth of the produce. *Kharaj* was the tax on land held by non-Muslims. According to Islamic law its rate was to be from one-tenth to one-half. *Khams* was one-fifth of the booty captured in wars against the infidels. Four-fifths of it went to the army. The *zakat* was a religious tax levied upon Muslims only. It was charged on the property if its value exceeded a certain fixed amount. The value of the property which was exempted from this tax was called *nisab*. Its rate was one-fortieth or $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the property. The proceeds of this tax were spent on specified items for the benefit of Muslims only, such as, repair of mosques and tombs, expenditure on

religious endowments and paying stipends and subsistence allowances to men of piety and poverty.

What is Jizya. *Jizya* or poll tax was charged from non-Muslims only. There is a difference of opinion among scholars about the nature of this tax. Some maintain that it was a religious tax levied on the non-Muslims "in return for which they received protection of life and property and exemption from military service, as non-Muslims were not entitled, according to orthodox jurists, to live in a Muslim country." Some of the modern Muslim scholars, however, hold that it was a secular tax charged from non-Muslims, as they were exempt from military service, which every Musalman, at least in theory, was liable to render to the State. Early Muslim jurists divided taxes into two groups—religious taxes and secular taxes—and they included *jizya* in the latter category. The religious tax was the *zakat* or the *sadqah*, which was charged from Muslims only. As *jizya* was not charged from the Muslims and as there was no fixed rule that its proceeds should be spent for religious purposes only, it was included by Muslim jurists among the secular taxes. The view that *jizya* is a secular tax on the basis of the above classification is evidently untenable. Whatever might have been the original intention with which this tax was levied in Islamic lands outside India, there is no doubt that, by the time the Arabs conquered Sindh, *jizya* had acquired a religious significance. It was imposed on the non-Muslims as the State gave them "protection of life and property and exemption from military service," and the Sultans considered it to be a religious duty to realise this tax rigorously. Those of our modern writers who hold this tax to be secular conveniently forget the first part of the injunction, namely, the protection of life and property of the *zimmis*, and emphasize only the latter part, namely, exemption from military service. It is clear from the history of the Mughul period that the vassal Hindu rajas who furnished military assistance to the Mughul emperors in the time of Babur and Humayun and in the early days of the reign of Akbar and throughout that of Aurangzeb, were not exempt from the payment of *jizya*. We know definitely that the ruler of Udaipur was required to cede a certain part of his territory in lieu of *jizya* while, at the same time, he had placed a contingent of his troops at the disposal of Aurangzeb. It is, thus, obvious that *jizya* had a religious colour about it. The ruling of *qazi* Mughis-ud-din of Bayana about this tax has already

been given in a former chapter. It will be too much in view of the facts of the history of the entire period to maintain that *jizya* was a secular tax like *Turush ka danda* or any other poll tax.

Women and children, monks and beggars and the blind and the cripple were exempt from *jizya*. For purposes of this tax the entire Hindu population was divided into three grades. The first grade paid at the rate of 48 *dirhams*, the second at 24 *dirhams* and the third at 12 *dirhams*.

Other taxes. There was a tax on import, which was 2½ per cent on merchandise; on horses it was 5 per cent. From the non-Muslims the excise or import tax was charged at double the rate of that from the Muslims. Then there were a house tax, a grazing tax, a water tax and a number of other minor taxes. The State charged one-fifth of all minerals and one-fifth of treasure acquired by an individual. The State also claimed a share of unstamped bullion minted and found in an area conquered by the Muslims. All the property of men dying in the State and without heirs went to the State. Another important source of income was the presents made to the Sultans by the people, officers and nobles. This brought in a large revenue every year.

Land revenue. Land revenue was, of course, a most important source of the income of the Sultanate of Delhi, next only to plunder and booty acquired in the time of war. For the purpose of fiscal administration there existed four kinds of land, namely, (1) *khalisa* territory, (2) land divided into *iqtas* and held by *muqtis* either for a number of years or for lifetime, (3) the principalities of the Hindu chiefs who had come to terms with the Sultan, and (4) the land given away to Muslim scholars and saints in gift, such as *milk* or *inam* or *waqf*. The *khalisa* was directly administered by the central government. But the State dealt with local revenue officers, like *chaudharis* and *muqaddams*, and not with individual peasants. There was an *amil* or revenue collector in each sub-division (probably *shiq*) who collected revenue from the above named officers, while they, in their turn, realised it from the peasants. The State demand or scale of revenue was not based on any careful calculation and the ascertainment of the actual produce of the soil and seems to have been a summary assessment. In the *iqta* the administration, including assessment and collection of revenue, was in the hands of the *muqti* who deducted his own share and paid the surplus to the

central government. It was in his interest to show a nominal surplus and to evade payment on one pretext or another. The Sultan, therefore, appointed, on the recommendation of the *wazir*, an officer, called *khwaja* in each *iqta* to keep an eye on the revenue collection and exercise some check on the *muqti*. The possibility of collusion between the *muqti* and the *khwaja* was minimised by the presence of spies who reported directly to the central government about the activities of the local officers. The Hindu rajas who owed allegiance to the Sultan enjoyed complete autonomy in their respective States and were required to pay tribute. Similarly, *zamindars* paid a fixed revenue to the government and the peasants in their jurisdiction did not know any authority except their own landlords. The land given away as *waqf* or *inam* was free from revenue assessment and was allowed to become a hereditary possession of the grantees.

The system, as described above, continued throughout the period of the Sultanate of Delhi. The first ruler to introduce a vital change in the revenue policy and administration was Ala-ud-din Khalji. His revenue policy was guided by two main considerations, namely, (1) increasing the State's income to the utmost limit, and (2) keeping the people in economic want so as to prevent them from entertaining any thoughts of insubordination and rebellion. Accordingly, he undertook the following measures.

Firstly, he confiscated the land held by Muslim grantees and religious land held as *milk* (proprietary right), *inam* (free gifts), *ibarat* (pensions) and *waqf* (endowment). Most of the land of the above description was annexed to the State; but some assignees seem to have remained untouched. Secondly, he withdrew the privileges hitherto enjoyed by Hindu *muqaddams*, *khuts* and *chaudharis* who were obliged to pay taxes, like others, on the land held by them and also the house and the grazing taxes. Thirdly, he increased the state demand to one-half of the produce. Fourthly, he imposed some other taxes on the peasants in addition to the land revenue and those that were already in vogue. These were the house tax and the grazing tax. *Jizya*, customs duties and *zakat* continued to be levied, as in the time of the previous Sultans. Fifthly, he introduced the measurement of land in order to ascertain the actual produce and had the *patwari's* records requisitioned to provide the revenue settlement. Sixthly, he established an efficient machinery for the rigorous collection of all kinds of revenue and did not make any allowance for any damage,

natural or accidental, to the crops. Though measurement could not be applied to all the provinces of his dominion, the aim of his policy was to increase the revenue considerably and to make all classes of the people, such as peasants, landlords, merchants and traders, to shoulder the burden of taxation.

Ala-ud-din's policy, being too rigid and unpopular, could not be followed by his weak successors. Many of his harsh regulations were allowed to fall into decay; but the scale of revenue fixed by him was not altered. Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq softened the rigour of Ala-ud-din's revenue policy and administration, though he did not, in any way, lessen his scale of demand of the State which continued to be one-half of the produce as before. In the first place, he recognised the principle of making due allowances for damages to the crops due to natural calamity or accident and remitted a proportionate revenue. Secondly, he allowed the *khuts*, *muqaddams* and *chaudharis* to enjoy exemption from the taxes on their land and on their grazing animals. Thirdly, he laid down that State demand from any *iqta* should not be enhanced more than one-tenth or one-eleventh of the standard assessment in a year. But Ghiyas-ud-din's fiscal administration was marred by two defects, namely, the abandonment of measurement and reversion to the policy of assessing the revenue by guess or computation, and the resumption of the practice of granting assignment of land to civil and military officers.

Muhammad bin Tughluq, who followed him, was animated by the desire of systematising the fiscal administration of the realm. Under his instructions the department of revenue undertook the compilation of a comprehensive register of the income and expenditure of the Sultanate with a view to introduce a uniform standard of land revenue and to make sure that no village remained unassessed; but his necessary and useful work remained unfinished. His next experiment was to increase the scale of taxes, other than the land revenue which continued to be charged at 50 per cent, in the Ganga-Yamuna Doab. The measure was bitterly resented; but the Sultan continued to realise the taxes at the enhanced rate inspite of a famine due to the failure of rains. The result was a fearful rebellion. Yet he would not withdraw the ordinance. He advanced loans and sunk irrigation wells, but it was too late. The entire doab was ruined. The Sultan's other reform was the establishment of the department of agriculture, called *diwan-i-kohi*, with a view to extending the area under cultivation. But, this, too, failed.

Firoz Tughluq's accession in 1351 marks a turning point in the agrarian policy of the Sultanate of Delhi. He paid great attention to the revenue affairs and sincerely desired to foster the material prosperity of the people. First of all, he healed the wounds inflicted by his late cousin and wrote off the *taqavi* loans, increased the salaries of the revenue staff and abolished the use of physical coercion to which the governors and revenue officers were subjected. Next he fixed the revenue of the entire *khalisa* land on a permanent basis after careful and laborious examination of local records. Thirdly, he abolished as many as twenty-four vexatious taxes, including the much-hated grazing and house taxes, and charged, in conformity with the Quranic law, only five taxes—*kharaj*, *khams*, *jizya*, *zakat* and irrigation tax. Fourthly, he constructed as many as five canals and sunk numerous wells for the irrigation of fields. Fifthly, he encouraged the cultivation of superior crops, such as, sugarcane, oil-seeds, poppy, etc. Sixthly, he planted many gardens and encouraged production of fruits. These wise measures greatly enhanced the royal revenues and brought about general material prosperity of the people.

Firoz's administration, however, suffered from three great defects, namely, (1) the application of the principle of farming out of land revenue, (2) the pernicious customs of granting assignments of land revenue and permitting the public sale of the assignment deeds, and (3) the extension of the scope and the rigorous realisation of *jizya*.

Although the just and generous rules of Firoz Tughluq's revenue administration fell into negligence during the weak days of his successors and the confusion following Timur's invasion, yet in essence they continued to be followed by the later Tughluqs and the Sayyids. When the Lodis came to power, they divided almost the entire land in their dominion among the important Afghan families. The *khalisa* land was greatly reduced in size and importance. Sikandar Lodi made an attempt to revive measurement, but otherwise, he made no important alteration in the revenue rules and regulations.

There is a controversy regarding the scale of revenue demanded by the Sultans of Delhi. According to a modern scholar it was one-fifth of the produce during most of the period. This conclusion is based on guess and seems to be erroneous. The Muslim law, as expounded by orthodox jurists, lays down that the rate of *kharaj* should vary from one-tenth to one-half of the produce. We know that in every Muslim land as well as in India, the State demanded

one-tenth of the produce from the Muslim cultivator, if his land was not irrigated from the waters of the State canals or public tanks or wells. On the other hand, if his land was watered by State canals or wells, he had to pay a water tax as well. As throughout our period Hindu traders had to pay the excise tax at a rate which was double of that chargeable from the Muslims, it can be legitimately inferred from this that the Hindu cultivators must have been charged double the revenue of what the Muslim cultivators were required to pay, that is, the scale of land revenue in the case of Hindu peasants must have been one-fifth of the produce. If this rule was at all followed, it could have been so during the rule of the so-called Slave kings only. Ala-ud-din Khalji increased the scale of land revenue to one-half of the produce and all his successors on the throne of Delhi down to the extinction of the Sultanate continued to make the same demand. It has been established by modern research that Sher Shah charged one-third,[2] which was considered to be a legitimate and just demand during his time and which was later adopted by Akbar the Great. Considering these circumstances, it seems probable that even during the days of the so-called Slave kings the State demand was one-third of the gross produce of the soil. But throughout the period several other taxes besides the land revenue were levied upon the peasants. The chronicles tell us that Qutub-ud-din Aibak had abolished all un-Islamic taxes and that they had to be abolished again and again by several other Sultans. It is, therefore, clear that throughout the period of the Sultanate of Delhi the peasant was required to pay many taxes over and above the land revenue. It is irrelevant to enquire as to who was responsible for the continuance of these taxes and whether they went to fill the coffers of the Sultan or were appropriated by corrupt revenue officers, governors and ministers. The irresistible conclusion, however, is that the peasants were not allowed to enjoy more than one-third of the fruits of their labour.

The main items of expenditure were the Sultan's household, civil and military services, religious endowments and charity, wars and rebellions and huge presents sent to the Khalifa and to the religious places outside India.

JUSTICE AND PEACE

The *diwan-i-qaza* (department of justice) was the weakest and most ill-organised department of administration. The Sultan, being

[2] Refer to *Sher Shah And His Successors* by A. L. Srivastava, pp. 71-76.

the fountainhead of justice, was responsible for upholding and maintaining the Quranic law which, in theory, was the only law recognised by the Sultanate of Delhi. He was, therefore, the head of the department of justice, held court twice a week and decided cases in person. But, though normally the highest court of appeal, he often tried original cases also. When called upon to decide religious cases, the Sultan was assisted by the chief *sadr* (*sadr-us-sudur*) and the *mufti*; but in secular cases he had the assistance of the chief *qazi* (*qazi-ul-qazat*). Throughout our period these two high offices, namely, those of the chief *sadr* and the chief *qazi* had one and the same person as their incumbent. This person sat with the king in two capacities—as chief *sadr* in religious cases and as chief *qazi* in secular cases.

The chief *qazi* was designated as the head of the department of justice, but he was only its nominal head; for the department was, in fact, controlled by the Sultan himself. The chief *qazi* constituted himself as the highest court of appeal only when the Sultan's court was not in session. Even when he acted as the highest court of appeal, his decisions were liable to be revised by the Sultan. Nor was the chief *qazi* the real administrative head; for we are told that the Sultan appointed provincial and district *qazi* and *amir-i-dad* in important cities, may be on the chief *qazi's* recommendation, and was the *de facto* incharge of their postings, transfer and dismissal. The chief *qazi* lived and held his court at the capital. He was assisted by a *mufti* (legal interpreter); he supervised the provincial judges and heard appeals from their decisions.

There was an *amir-i-dad* in big cities whose office seems to correspond to that of the modern city magistrate. He had two duties to discharge, that is, to apprehend criminals and to try cases with the help of the *qazi*. He was, thus, both a judge and an executive officer. In the latter capacity, he was required to enforce the *qazi's* decisions and to co-operate with the *muhtasib* in enforcing his regulations. He had an assistant, known as the *naib-i-dadbak*.

There was a *qazi* in every province and one in every district. Important cities had *qazis* and *amir-i-dads*. The government left small towns and rural areas, which, in those days, comprised ninety per cent of the population, untouched and appointed no judicial officers of its own to administer justice. Fortunately, our villages were tiny self-sufficient commonwealths and had their own *panchayats*,

which not only decided all their disputes but also enforced their decisions. The people, therefore were happy to be left undisturbed by their foreign masters whose rule over the villages existed only for the collection of revenue.

Notwithstanding Dr. I. H. Qureshi's rhetoric, contemporary Persian chronicles yield the above picture, in brief. Their perusal reveals glaring defects in the administration of justice. There was no proper grading of the courts with clearly defined jurisdictions. The suitor could lodge a complaint or file a suit anywhere he liked. He could, for instance, go to the court of the *qazi* of his town or to that of the provincial *qazi* or even to the Sultan's court. The highest court of appeal also tried original cases, that is, cases in the first instance. Then, the judicial procedure was not uniform all over the kingdom and was very irregular. Cases were started without due enquiries. The proceedings of the court were not recorded and the trials were summary trials. The law administered by the courts was the Quranic law. Cases between Muslims and Hindus were decided by the *qazi* on the basis of this law. Customary law which was administered in the trial of secular cases in which the parties belonged to different faiths, was not the written law and hence could be interpreted according to the individual judge's lights and whims. Great injustice must generally have been the result in regard to a suppliant for justic whose religion differed from that of the *qazi*.

The penal law was very severe. Culprits were usually punished with mutilation and death. The usual practice was to make use of force and torture to extort confession from the convicts. Although the government followed the policy of minimum interference with the social affairs of the Hindus and applied what was designated as the *ghair tashrii* law in deciding their cases, yet grave injustice must have been the result, as, in those days, there were no *vakils* to place the complainant's point of view before the judge. The chief *qazi* was at once the chief religious officer (*sadr-us-sudur*) and the chief judge. Obviously, such a person could hardly adopt a strictly neutral and impartial attitude in a case in which the parties belonged to different religions. Moreover, the chief *qazi*, and the *qazis* in the provinces, districts and towns had many other duties of a secular as well as religious nature to perform, which must have diverted their attention from their main duty. They had, for instance, to supervise and manage the property of the orphans and the lunatics,

to execute testamentary dispositions and to supervise the property given away in endowments. They had also to help destitute Muslim widows and to find suitable husbands for them. Another work entrusted to them was the prevention of encroachment on public thoroughfares and open spaces. They were required to nominate persons to take charge of contested property. Their multifarious activities, which had little to do with their judicial duties, must have greatly stood in the way of their administering even-handed justice. Above all, most of the area had no government judicial officers and the people were obliged to have recourse to devise their own means to settle their disputes.

There was no police worth the name except a *kotwal* in important cities. The term *kotwal* is derived from the Sanskrit word 'kotpal' which shows that he must have originally been a military officer. He had a small contingent of men under him and his main duty was to maintain peace and order in his jurisdiction. There was another officer, known as *muhtasib*, in every province and in every important town. His duties were partly secular. Besides enforcing the Islamic regulations and seeing that the Muslims said their five daily prayers and kept the fast of Ramzan and observed other religious ordinances in their daily life, he had to control the markets and to regulate weights and measures. He enforced the regulation relating to the prohibition from intoxicants, such as, liquor, *bhang*, *ganja* and other drugs of a like nature. There was no police in the villages and even in small towns. There were no well-constituted prison-houses. Old forts and castles were utilised as prisons. The prison administration was lax and corruption among jail officials was common.

RELIGIOUS POLICY

Throughout the period of the Sultanate of Delhi, Islam was the religion of the State. It was considered to be the duty of the Sultan and his government to defend and to uphold the principles of this religion and to propagate them among the masses. According to the Quranic law it is the highest duty of a Muslim king to put down idolatry, to fight a holy war (*jihad*) against non-Muslims and to convert *dar-ul-harb* (non-Muslim territory) into *dar-ul-Islam* (Muslim land). In view of the clear injunctions given in their holy book, the *Quran*, the Sultans of Delhi were anxious to convert their Hindu subjects to Islam; but practical difficulties and political wisdom compelled them not to indulge in a perpetual war against them. Never-

theless, some of the over-zealous Sultans, such as Firoz Tughluq and Sikandar Lodi, utilised state machinery and funds for religious propaganda. But the politically-minded Sultans, like Ala-ud-din Khalji or Muhammad bin Tughluq, refrained from making use of state resources and machinery for religious propaganda and proselytisation. Yet even the most enlightened among them, like Muhammad bin Tughluq, upheld the principles of their faith and refused permission to repair Hindu or Buddhist temples. For instance, when the emperor of China sent an embassy to Delhi to request permission to repair Budhhist temples which had suffered destruction at the hands of the Sultan's army during his Qarajal expedition, Muhammad bin Tughluq refused it on the ground that his religion forbade him from acceding to the request. Thus even during the reign of the so-called liberal-minded Sultans, the Hindus had no permission to build new temples or to repair old ones. Throughout the period, they were known as *zimmis*, that is, people living under guarantee and the guarantee was that they would enjoy restricted freedom in following their religion if they paid the *jizya*. The *zimmis* were not to celebrate their religious rites openly or offensively and never to do any propaganda on behalf of their religion. A number of disabilities were imposed upon them in matters of State employment and enjoyment of civic rights. In fact they were not treated as full-fledged citizens of the State. It was a practice with the Sultans to destroy the Hindu temples and the images therein. Firoz Tughluq and Sikandar Lodi prohibited the Hindus from bathing at the ghats in the sacred rivers and encouraged them in every possible way to embrace the Muslim religion. The converts were exempted from the *jizya* and given posts in the State service and even granted rewards in cash or by grant of land. In short, there was not only no real freedom for the Hindus to follow their religion, but the state followed a policy of intolerance and persecution. The contemporary Muslim chronicles abound in detailed descriptions of desecration of images and destruction of temples and of the conversion of hundreds and thousands of the Hindus. Our religious buildings and places bear witness to the iconoclastic zeal of the Sultans and their followers. One has only to visit Ajmer, Mathura, Ayodhya, Banaras and other holy cities to see the half broken temples and images of those times with their heads, faces, hands and feet defaced and demolished.

Some of the modern Muslim writers have made an endeavour to show that the Sultans did not follow a policy of intolerence and persecution. They maintain that temples and idols were destroyed only during war; that the Hindu temples were converted into mosques and, therefore, not shown any disrespect; and that by putting down idolatry the Sultans taught the Hindus to believe in one God and, therefore, rendered them a service. One writer (Dr. Sufi, *vide* his *History of Kashmir*) has gone to the extent of saying that certain sections among the Hindus, like the Arya Samajists, preach against idol worship. Medieval Muslims enforced what the Arya Samajists have been preaching now. Dr. Muhammad Nazim maintains that the Hindu temples, being store-houses of wealth, invited trouble for themselves. A scholarly theologian, Maulana Sulaiman Nadvi, advises us not to take the hyperbolic statements of the contemporary historians, like Minhaj-us-Siraj, Zia-ud-din Barani, Shams-i-Siraj Afif and Yahiya bin Ahmad and others who have given graphic descriptions of religious persecution, temple-destructions and image-breaking in their works, too seriously, as they were meant, according to him, for the perusal of the Islamic peoples outside India.

It is not necessary to examine these views at length. The arguments are palpably weak and their authors unaccustomed to see the other side of a case. To take up the first, it is easy to imagine that a fanatical Sultan could declare an unprovoked war against his independent Hindu neighbour and then carry on a campaign of destruction of temples and images and conversion of the innocent Hindu population. He would, of course, have the self-righteous satisfaction that he was doing all this during war. And his modern apologist, knowing though he may be that ninety-nine out of a hundred wars fought by the Sultans of Delhi were unprovoked wars, would justify the wanton persecution by quoting the exploded slogan that "everything is fair in love and war." Moreover, there are numerous instances on record that in normal times of peace temple-destruction and image-breaking was often resorted to. As regards the second argument, it would be perhaps permissible to enquire as to how would the author of the argument feel if a mosque were transformed into a temple. It will, of course, remain a sacred place inspite of its transformation. As for the plea that the much-valued unity of Godhood was impressed upon the Hindu population by destroying stone images, it will be admitted that it defeated its own

object and looked like sending people to heaven by force and against their will. It is unfortunate that our Turkish and Afghan rulers could not see that the Hindus in general have believed in the unity of God through the ages and that the image-worship, according to them, is only a means to an end. The great Muslim scholar and savant, Al-Beruni, clearly realised this. Dr. Nazim seems to belong to that old fraternity which imposed 'purda' on women lest their looks should invite trouble from the vagrant males. He will perhaps appreciate the naked truth that the sin of the Hindus consisted in their failure to make an example of the fanatical brigands rather than their thrift and piling up of wealth. Maulana Sulaiman Nadvi's advice amounts to this : do not believe in the detailed account and facts and figures given by the contemporary Muslim writers for they were propagandists; have faith in the generalisations of modern writers, for propaganda has no place in the writings of the 20th century scholars. The modern reader is free to draw his own conclusions. He can easily separate the wheat from the chaff.

The Sultans of Delhi and a vast majority of the Muslim population of the Sultanate being orthodox Sunnis, were absolutely opposed to the Shias and other dissenting sects in Islam. They were animated by a firm desire to root out heresy. In fact, their policy aimed at extirpating dissent in Islam. Karmathians, Shias, Mahdavis and other sects were, therefore, mercilessly repressed and their practices put down. Sometimes their leaders were tortured and even put to death. The Shias were particularly looked down upon as heretics. Firoz Tughluq took credit for placing a ban on the practices of the Shia religion and for persecuting its followers. He ordered their religious books to be publicly burnt. As far as possible, the Shias were not given posts in the State service. No king during this period employed Persian Shias in key-posts or in places of trust and responsibility. It was inevitable that the followers of dissenting Islamic sects should be dissatisfied. The discontent of the Karmathians found expression in open rebellions and violence in the time of Iltutmish and also in that of Raziah; but they were put down with a high hand. A majority of the *shaikhs*, who were liberal-minded mystics, were also looked at with disfavour, because they were unorthodox in their views and had a large following. In short, the period was one of rigid and narrowminded religious orthodoxy.

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THE NORTH-WESTERN FRONTIER POLICY : MONGOL INVASIONS

The problem : the scientific frontier of India

During the medieval period, when steam-ships were unknown our country was vulnerable in the north-western corner only, as the eastern Himalayas and the Assam hills—the only other part that could yield passage to a foreign invader—were too difficult in that age to be crossed by an army of invasion. It was through this passage that foreign invaders entered India during ancient and medieval times. The policy of our rulers through the ages, therefore, was to defend the north-western frontier. But this frontier, owing to the peculiar configuration of the mountain ranges in the area, could not be successfully defended and controlled without an effective military possession and control of the area extending from Kabul *via* Ghazni to Kandhar which commands routes to the fertile valleys of the Panjab. The Kabul-Ghazni-Kandhar line, flanked by the Hindu-kush, may, therefore, be correctly designated as the "scientific frontier of India." Side by side with acquiring and defending this line, it was equally essential to control the turbulent tribes that inhabited the region lying between Kashmir and the sea, as through this belt of land ran the main passages from the Panjab to the above line and *vice versa*. The enormity of the problem was heightened by the presence of war-like and independent tribes, like the Khokhars in the Salt Range region, situated in the northern half of the Sindh Sagar Doab. The Khokhars carried their depredations into the heart of the Panjab and added to the difficulties connected with the protection and defence of our north-western frontier during the medieval age.

The actual frontier, 1206—1217

The problem did not present any special difficulty to the Ghaznavide rulers of the Panjab during the 11th and 12th centuries, as Kabul, Ghazni and Kandhar belonged to them. Nor was their successor, Muhammad of Ghur, called upon to meet an unprecedented

emergency for the same reason. But, after Muhammad's death, the first Sultan of Delhi, Qutub-ud-din Aibak, made a feeble attempt to reach the scientific frontier of India by occupying Ghazni in 1208. He met with failure and had to abandon Ghazni. Soon after this, the Sultan was faced with a new problem. Ghazni had been annexed by the Khwarizm emperor, the eastern frontier of which now touched the Indus. As the infant Delhi Sultanate came into contact with a powerful neighbour, its north-western frontier was directly threatened. But, fortunately, the boundary between the Delhi Sultanate and the Khwarizm empire, which was the river Indus, remained undisturbed, as, owing to the rapid expansion of the Mongols, the Khwarizm empire itself was trembling for its safety. Within a decade the danger overtook the empire; the ferocious Mongols tore the Central Asian Muslim State to pieces and occupied its territories, including Afghanistan, Ghazni and Peshawar. The river Indus, thus, ceased to be the north-western boundary of the Sultanate and its frontier was pushed back into the interior of the Panjab. In view of these developments there was no question of the Sultan's trying to obtain control of the "scientific frontier of India." The problem before them, throughout the thirteenth century, was how to retain what they had possessed, namely, the country enclosed by a line stretching from Sialkot to Nandanah in the Salt Range, which Iltutmish had brought under his possession soon after 1217.

Iltutmish and the Mongols

By 1220 the Mongol hordes under their great leader, Changiz Khan, had brought about the complete annihilation of the Khwarizm empire and driven its ruler, Ala-ud-din Muhammad, into the Caspian Sea to die there (1220). Ala-ud-din's heir, Jalal-ud-din Mangbarni, too, fled in terror from Khurasan to Ghazni. As Changiz pursued him from Talkan, he quitted Ghazni and fled to the frontier of our country. Being overtaken on the Indus, he was obliged to turn back and fight, but he was defeated. In sheer desperation he sent his family in a boat to be drowned in the Indus, and, flinging his own horse into the river, crossed over to the left bank and sneaked into the Sindh Sagar Doab. It was lucky that Changiz Khan, who stayed near the right bank of the Indus for three months, did not decide to pursue the fugitive prince across the river and thus violate the independence of the Sultanate of Delhi. Had he chosen to do so, the nascent Turkish kingdom in India would have succumbed to the

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Mongol onslaught, as the older and more powerful Muslim kingdoms of Central Asia had already done. But Iltutmish seems to have arrived at some kind of understanding with the Mongol leader, whereby he had, probably, agreed not to provide any shelter or protection to the fugitive Mangbarni. At any rate, he wisely followed the policy of keeping the Khwarizm prince at an arm's length so as to avoid giving provocation to the Mongols. In view of the Sultan's friendly attitude, Changiz's reported decision to return to Karaqoram through India, for which he is said to have asked Iltutmish's permission, was abandoned and the Sultanate was saved from a great catastrophe. Changiz Khan returned to his country through the Hindukush in the winter of 1222.

Effect of Mangbarni's activity in Sindh

Though Changiz scrupulously respected India's sovereignty, his followers continued to harass Mangbarni and made a number of raids on the *cis*-Indus region. The Khwarizm prince, after entering the Salt Range, collected a small army, defeated the Hindu chief of the Salt Range and prepared to carve out a kingdom for himself. Changiz Khan, thereafter, sent an army from Ghazni to pursue the fugitive prince. Mangbarni, therefore, retreated towards Lahore and sent an envoy, Ain-ul-mulk, to Delhi to request for shelter. Iltutmish refused it on the plea that the climate of Delhi would not suit him. Mangbarni, therefore, made an alliance with the Khokhar chief who gave his daughter in marriage to him, besides supplying him with military assistance. The Mongol troops, who were sent to pursue the prince did not follow him into the Panjab, probably because they had been instructed by Changiz Khan not to do so. They only plundered the neighbourhood of the Salt Range.

Assisted by a Khokhar army, Mangbarni invaded the territory of Nasir-ud-din Qubachah, who fled to Multan. He captured Sehwan, besides some other important places, and even sent an expedition to Anhilwara from where he obtained some booty. Another Mongol army now appeared in his pursuit. Mangbarni, therefore, left India, by way of Makran, for Iraq in 1224.

The result of his three years' stay in the western Panjab and Sindh was that the Mongols brought the *cis*-Indus tracts under their influence. The Mongol army under Turai captured Nandanah and proceeded to Multan. He besieged Qubachah in that city. Multan

was about to fall when excessive heat compelled the Mongols to withdraw. While on the return journey, they plundered the districts of Lahore and Multan. Even after their return, the Panjab and Multan continued to remain in a state of turmoil. The tribes of the Salt Range became bolder than before and attempted to take advantage of the confusion. They occupied the whole of the northern part of the Sindh Sagar Doab and spread further east beyond the river Bias and plundered Lahore. Only Baniyan, west of the Indus, remained in the hands of Hasan Qarlugh, a lieutenant of Mangbarni. Another officer of Mangbarni, named Hasan Pai, held possession of the most of Qubachah's territory, including Multan. The Mongol movement crushed Qubachah's power and gave Iltutmish an opportunity to defeat him and annex his territory, including Multan and Uch. About the year 1228 the Delhi Sultanate, thus, came into direct contact with the Mongols, who had made Afghanistan their base of operations.

In 1229 the Mongols had decided on permanent conquest and annexation of Khurasan and Afghanistan. This policy led to a series of Mongol operations in the territories lying just beyond the north-western frontier of the Delhi kingdom. In 1235 the Mongols captured Siestan in western Afghanistan. After that year they crossed into Derajat valley leading to upper Sindh. At the same time, they pushed into the upper Indus region. Owing to these hostile movements Hasan Qarlugh found his position untenable in Baniyan and decided to carve out a kingdom for himself in Sindh. He even wanted to form an anti-Mongol alliance with Delhi; but Raziah, who was the ruler of Delhi at this time, refused to entangle herself in the affair and thus court Mongol hostility. Her policy of friendly neutrality obliged the Mongols not to violate the territory of the Sultanate. Nevertheless, the inner frontier of the Sultante was pushed back to the Chinab.

Multan, Sindh and West Panjab in Mongol hands

With the fall of Raziah in 1240 came to an end Delhi's understanding with the Mongols. In 1241 Bahadur Tair, at the head of a huge Mongol army, crossed the Indus and, for the first time, besieged Lahore. The governor fled to save his skin, but the people of the city put up a brave resistance. They had, however, to submit. The Mongols destroyed the town and its defences. After their return, only a part of the *iqta* of Lahore reverted to the possession of Delhi.

The river Ravi now became the virtual boundary between the Sultanate and the Mongol sphere of influence.

In 1245 Multan and Sindh were also lost to Delhi. The former was captured by Hasan Qarlugh, while the latter was in the possession of the descendants of the rebel Kabir Khan. These two provinces were recovered by Balban during the reign of Alauddin Masud Shah (1245).

The next Mongol invasion was undertaken by Sali Bahadur who besieged Multan in 1247. He raised the siege on getting an idemnity of one lakh *dinars*. Next, he proceeded to Lahore whose governor was compelled to pay a large indemnity and become a vassal of the Mongols. Sometime after Nasir-ud-din's accession, Balban undertook an expedition into the heart of the Panjab; but he does not seem to have been successful in recovering the tract beyond the river Ravi which had, for some time, been under the Mongol sphere of influence. Similarly, Multan and Sindh remained in foreign hands till 1250 when they were recovered by a powerful military governor of the Sultanate, named Sher Khan. Nevertheless Delhi's hold on these provinces was precarious and they changed hands a number of times. The situation was complicated by the fact that some of the nobles and officers of Delhi were in treasonable negotiations with the Mongols and even went over to their side. Sher Khan was one such officer. He was won over by Balban after considerable difficulty.

A number of Mongol invasions occurred during the period following Nasir-ud-din's accession, particularly in Multan and Sindh. Balban, who held the post of *naib*, made great military preparations to oppose the progress of the invaders, but he did not cross the north-western boundary of the Sultanate to invade the territory under the Mongol sphere of influence. He seems to have acquiesced in the transference of the whole of Sindh, Multan and West Panjab to the Mongols. The Sultan, also, seems to have avoided hostility with the vassals of the Mongols. Balban transferred Sher Khan from Bhatinda in 1258, as he was meditating recovery of Multan and Uch from the Mongol governor, Kashlu Khan. This was done in conformity with the policy of avoiding hostilities with the Mongols. In view of this tacit agreement, there was an exchange of envoys between Sultan Nasir-ud-din Mahmud and the Mongol chief, Hulagu. It is, thus, clear that the court of Delhi had reconciled itself to the loss of Multan, Sindh and a greater portion of the Panjab beyond the river Bias.

Balban's frontier policy

The provinces of Multan and Sindh were, however, recovered by Delhi during the early days of Balban's reign; but the Mongols could not be dislodged from the north-western Panjab. Nevertheless, Lahore was wrested from enemy hands. It was incorporated in the frontier province of Multan and Dipalpur. During the early years of this Sultan's reign, Sher Khan was appointed governor of the frontier province of Bhatinda, Dipalpur and Lahore which was constituted into a military command. After Sher Khan's death, Multan, Sindh and Dipalpur were placed in the charge of Balban's eldest son, Prince Muhammad. The remaining parts of the frontier, which consisted of Samana and Sunam, were given to the second son of the Sultan, named Bughra Khan. Thus, Balban placed the entire north-western frontier in the custody and care of his sons. The governor of Samana and Sunam was to work under the orders of that of Multan and Sindh. He built a line of forts on his north-western frontier and garrisoned them with seasoned Pathan troops. A standing army, 17,000 to 18,000 strong, was set apart for the defence of the frontier and was posted in this region. The rest of the army was also kept in a state of preparedness for an emergency. These admirable arrangements so strengthened the frontier that, inspite of many vigorous invasions undertaken by the Mongols, they could make no headway throughout Balban's reign. About 1279 the Mongols renewed their attack and ravaged the country as far as Sunam; but the combined armies of Prince Muhammad from Multan, Bughra Khan from Samana and Malik Mubarak Bektar from Delhi completely defeated the enemy and drove him back to the West Panjab. The Mongol menace was warded off, but only for a temporary period. In 1285 the Mongols, under their leader, Timur Khan, again invaded Lahore and Dipalpur. Prince Muhammad proceeded against them. But he was killed, fighting in an ambush, in February, 1286. Inspite of this disaster, the defence arrangements of Balban proved so strong that the Mongols could not penetrate any further and had to beat a retreat. The Mongol menace, however, profoundly affected Balban's domestic and foreign policies. Not only had he to maintain a powerful force at an enormous cost, he was also obliged to give up all thought of aggressive conquest of the territories belonging to independent princes.

Two Mongol invasions of Multan and lower Panjab took place

in the time of Kaiqubad, in the course of the second of which the invaders over-ran the territory from Multan to Lahore; but both times they were driven back with heavy losses. Owing to the strength of Balban's frontier defence, or in view of the political truce subsisting between them and the Sultanate of Delhi, or owing to both these causes, the Mongols made no attempt to attack Delhi till the end of the so-called Slave dynasty. With the accession of the Khaljis, they changed their policy from one of concentrating their attention on raiding and, if possible, on conquering Multan, Sindh and the Panjab, to that of endeavouring to conquer Delhi itself. With their base in the Panjab, they now launched a series of aggressive campaigns against the capital of the Sultanate.

Mongol attacks on Delhi : defence arrangements of the Khaljis

The first and the only Mongol invasion during the reign of Jalal-ud-din Khalji took place in 1292. A Mongol army, estimated between one lakh and one lakh and fifty thousand, under a grandson of Hulagu, penetrated into the frontier province of the Sultanate and reached as far as Sunam. The Sultan encountered the invaders who were defeated and compelled to retreat. Jalal-ud-din permitted some of the Mongols, including Ulghu, a descendant of Changiz Khan, to settle down in Delhi. They accepted Islam and took up service under the Sultan who gave his daughter in marriage to Ulghu. These Mongol settlers became known as 'New Muslims'.

The reign of Ala-ud-din was marked by numerous Mongol attempts to conquer Delhi. The earliest attempt was made within a few months of his accession. Zafar Khan, a friend and commander of the new Sultan, defeated the invaders with great slaughter near Jalandar. The next invasion took place in 1297. The Mongols this time took the fortress of Sibi in Multan, but Zafar Khan again defeated them and took 1,700 of the invaders, including their leader, their wives and daughters, prisoners and sent them to Delhi. In 1299 the Mongols under Qutlugh Khwaja made a serious attempt to conquer Delhi. They besieged the capital and cut off supplies to it. The danger was so great that *kotwal* Ala-ul-mulk advised the Sultan not to risk his all by attacking them; but Ala-ud-din brushed aside this advice and decided to attack the Mongols. Zafar Khan led the charge and defeated them; but he himself was surrounded and slain. Nevertheless, the impression made by Zafar Khan was so great that the enemy had to beat a hurried retreat. For over three

NORTH-WEST FRONTIER
(In relation to Delhi)

U.S.S.R.
U.S.S.R.
Sar-i-pul
Maimana
BADAKHSHAN
Ghur
CHITRAL
HINDUKUSH MOUNTAIN
Herat
AFGHANISTAN
Kabul
KAFIRISTAN
DIR
Gilgit
KOHISTAN
BALTISTAN
Skardo
LADAKH
BAJAUR
SWAT
BUNER
MARDAN
HAZARA
KASHMIR
KARAQORAM RANGE MTS.
Jalalabad
KHAIBAR PASS
KURRAM
KHOST
TERAH
Peshawar
Taxila
Srinagar
PUNCH
Rawalpindi
Farah
Ghazni
KOHAT
ATTOK
WAZIRISTAN
Baniyan
Khushab
Rohtas
MIRPUR
JHELAM
UDHAMPUR
Chakansur
Kandahar
BANNU
SALT RANGE
Jammu
CHAMBA
Nandnah
Bhera
GUJARAT
Sialkot
MIANWALI
Kallurkot
DERAJAT
N.W. FRONTIER PROVINCE
ISMAILKHAN
GUJARANWALA
Pasraur
PANJAB
Amritsar
HOSHIARPUR
Kangara
Chaman
ZHOB
SHAIKHUPURA
JHANG
LAYALPUR
Lahore
Suket
Quetta
Sultanpur
Jalandor
Simla
Harappa
Kasur
Hajner
LUDHIANA
Samana
AMBALA
SIRMUR
Talamba
MONTGOMERY
Dipalpur
Ferozpur
Bhatinda
Sunam
Patiala
SIVALIK HILLS
TEHRI
GARHWAL
Multan
PATIALA
Sirsa
KARNAL
SAHARANPUR
Hardwar
ALMORA
BOLAN PASS
MARRI
SARAWAN
Kalat
CHAGAI
SINDH
DERA GHAZI KHAN
MUZAFFARGARH
Uch
DERA DOAB
SAGAR
BAHAWALPUR
KACHHI
BUGTI
HISAR
Panipat
MUZAFFAR NAGAR
MEERUT
BIJNOR
MORADABAD
NAINITAL
Sambhal
RAMPUR
Hansi
ROHTAK
Siri
Old Delhi
KHARAN
Jacobabad
Sukkar
Rohri
Panjnad
LARKHANA
BIKANER
GURGAON
Rawari
Baran
BAREILI
PILIBHIT
SHAHJAHANPUR
KHERI
Badaun
NEPAL
JAISALMER
ALWAR
BHARATPUR
Aligarh
Mathura
ETAH
FARRUKHABAD
HARDOI
SITAPUR
BAHRAICH
MAKRAN
Sehwan
Merta
JAIPUR
MAINPURI
Agra
GONDA
BASTI
BALUCHISTAN
RAJASTHAN
LAS BELA
SINDH
MARWAR
Ajmer
DHOLPUR
Etawa
BARABANKI
Lucknow
FAIZABAD
Ayodhya
GORAKHPUR
UNNAO
RAIBARELI
SULTANPUR
AZAMGARH
Kanpur
FATEHPUR
PRATAPGARH
Jaunpur
Gwalior
Karachi
Kotri
Haiderabad
Amarkot
BUNDI
Banaras
Allahabad
Thatta
Narwar
JHANSI
BANDA
Chittor
KOTA
Chanderi
PRITHA
MIRZAPUR
Kalinjar
Abu
MANDSOR
Ajaigarh
Anhilwara
Dabal
KUTCH
Ujjain
BHILSA
REWA
BHOPAL
Jabalpur
Indore
Jamnagar
Rajkot
Cambay
Baroda
Junagarh
ARABIAN SEA

0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles

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years the invaders had no courage to renew hostilities. But, being informed of Ala-ud-din's reverses in Telingana and his engagement in Rajasthan, Targhi, a Mongol leader, with an army of 1,20,000 troops, invaded Hindustan in 1303 and invested Delhi. Ala-ud-din was obliged to retire into the fortress of Siri, which, too, was surrounded. The Mongols devastated the surrounding country and carried raids into the streets of Delhi. But, owing to their inexperience of regular sieges, they had to abandon the attempt. Another invasion occurred in 1304 and was followed by a series of desperate attempts in 1306, 1307-8 and the years following; but they were all beaten. The Mongol fury spent itself in a series of all-out efforts to capture Delhi. The capital city was saved, as Ala-ud-din successfully followed Balban's policy of the defence of the frontier. He repaired and regarrisoned the frontier forts and posted a formidable army for its defence. The veteran warrior, Ghazi Tughluq, was appointed warden of the marches in 1305. The latter fought many an engagement with the Mongol marauders and kept the frontier safe from their depredations.

The later phase

After Ala-ud-din a few feeble attempts were made by the Mongols to plunder Hindustan. One such attempt was made during the reign of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq. But the leaders of the invading force were defeated and brought prisoners to Delhi. The most serious Mongol invasion occurred in 1328 or early in 1329 when the famous Mongol leader, Tarma Shirin, penetrated into the heart of the Sultanate and reached as far as Badaun. The invaders plundered and devastated the country on the way, but they were defeated by Muhammad bin Tughluq and pursued as far as Kalanaur in the modern Gurdaspur district in the Panjab. Firoz Tughluq's reign was singularly free from Mongol invasions. Their power in Central Asia was greatly weakened and they were losing their hold on the western Panjab also.

During the second half of the 14th century the Sultanate of Delhi, though very much weakened, had hardly any fear from the Mongol hordes. The Mongols in Central Asia had embraced Islam, and the great Turkish warrior, Timur, established a powerful dominion with his capital at Samarqand. Towards the end of the century, it was this man who crossed our north-western frontier and invaded the Sultanate of Delhi. As has been related in the chapter on the Tughluq dynasty, he inflicted greater misery on the country

than had been inflicted by any single invader in one single campaign before or after him.

Effects of the Mongol menace

The Mongol menace produced an important result on the internal and external policy of the Sultanate of Delhi. So long as the danger from them was great, it was always the policy of the ruler of Delhi to increase his military establishment to the highest limit. From Iltutmish down to the end of the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq the successive rulers of Delhi had to pay the greatest attention to their armies, to spend whatever they could afford on them and to take steps to see that there was, as far as possible, no internal disaffection or disunity which might be exploited by the invaders from the north-west. In view of these factors, their administration became more despotic than it would have been if there had been no danger of a foreign invasion from the north-west. Iltutmish, Balban, Ala-ud-din Khalji and Muhammad bin Tughluq had to follow the policy of militarism and to sacrifice their revenues at the altar of military preparedness. They could not afford to show any slackness or relax vigilance, as it would have brought ruin to the Sultanate like that which befell the older and more powerful Muslim kingdoms of Central Asia. Secondly, owing to the threat from the north-west, it became difficult for an average Sultan to pursue a policy of aggrandizement in the country and undertake aggressive campaigns for the conquest of independent Hindu kingdoms. Balban, for example, though animated by a strong desire for conquest, could not stir out of Delhi, and the only campaign that he undertook was that of the suppression of a rebellion in Bangal. Under these circumstances, only an extraordinarily gifted ruler, like Ala-ud-din Khalji, could play a double role, namely, defending the country from a foreign invasion and conquering independent kingdoms in the country. Muhammad Tughluq attempted to follow in his footsteps, but met with disastrous failure. The fear of Mongol invasions, thus, profoundly influenced the policy and fortunes of the Sultanate of Delhi. Had the Mongols succeeded, the history of our country would have taken a different course. The Sultanate, of course, would have come to an end; and the Mongols, being virtual Buddhists, would have gradually merged in the Hindu society like the Greeks, the Sakas and the Huns, and India would have been saved from the most baffling social and religious-cum-political problem of her history.

20

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

The ruling class

Throughout the period treated in this volume, the foreign Central Asian Muslims, particularly the Turks during the thirteenth, fourteenth and first-half of the fifteenth centuries and the Afghans in the second-half of the fifteenth and first quarter of the sixteenth centuries, formed the ruling class. Associated with the Turks were the Persians, the Arabs, the Abyssinians and the Egyptians. These foreigners constituted an exclusive ruling oligarchy. The Turk was the most jealous guardian of this foreign aristocracy. He was, in fact, its leader. Throughout the 13th century, he monopolised power and played the role of the leader of the Muslim people in Asia. He believed in the policy of racialism and rigidly excluded the Indian Musalman not only from a share in the power but also from the State service. From Qutub-ud-din Aibak down to Kaiqubad, the Sultanate rigidly adhered to the policy of Turkish monopoly of authority and Balban openly despised 'low-born non-Turks'. Towards the end of the thirteenth century countless Muslim refugees entered India from the Central Asian countries and swelled the rank of the ruling class. This led to a mixing up of the Muslims of different races and nationalities. Inter-marriages gradually brought about their fusion. The purity of blood of which the Turk was arrogantly proud, gave place to a heterogeneous race. With the advent of the rule of the Khaljis, these social forces began to work so powerfully that the Turk began to lose his monopoly of power and, for the first time in the history of the Sultanate, the policy of associating Indian converts with the administration was adopted. The credit for this must go to Ala-ud-din Khalji who appointed an able, though, in some respect, pervert, converted slave, Malik Kafur, as his deputy.

A heterogeneous ruling class could hardly be expected to work with a common aim and purpose. The nobility of the Sultanate period, though united during war against non-Muslims, was torn in times of peace by personal ambition, rivalry and even hostility, and generally pursued selfish interest to the detriment of the welfare of the State.

The Indian Muslims

The converted Muslim population, which must have been very small at the beginning of our period, began gradually to increase with the expansion of the Turkish dominion and authority. It consisted mostly of Hindus of low castes who, for various reasons, had abandoned religion of their forefathers and turned Muslims. The Indian Muslims were not only not admitted into the aristocracy of the conquerors but were not even given a share of their social and economic privileges. No Indian Musalman was appointed to a high post throughout the so-called Slave period except Imad-ud-mulk Rawat, who concealed his parentage and posed to be the offspring of foreign immigrants. Balban had an enquiry instituted into his lineage, and, when it was found that he was of Indian origin, the Sultan's regard for him was much diminished. It is said that this ruler "could not bear the sight of the native Musalman in his government." On one occasion, he administered a sharp rebuke to his courtiers for having selected an Indian Musalman for a clerical post in Amaroha. Iltutmish "is also reported to have felt an equal abhorrence for the Indian Muslims." Imad-ud-din Rayhan, the only other example of a converted Muslim to have reached a high place during this century, was the victim of a conspiracy formed by the haughty Turks. Barani's account of the cause of Rayhan's eclipse is significant. "The nobles and servants of the State," writes he, "were all Turks of pure origin and Tajiks of good stock; but Imad-ud-din was an eunuch and impotent; *he moreover belonged to one of the tribes of Hindustan.* Notwithstanding all this, he exercised authority over the heads of all these chiefs. They were disgusted with this state of affairs and could no longer endure it." A change, however, came in the fourteenth century when the Mongol successes stopped the flow of Central Asian Turks into India, and the Khaljis found it impossible to man the administration without the support of the Indian converts. So Ala-ud-din introduced the policy of appointing Indian Musalmans to some of the important posts, though no Indian convert was placed in a position which might enable him to lay down policy till the time of Firoz Tughluq when Khwaja Jahan, a Brahman convert to Islam, became prime minister. Muhammad bin Tughluq had preference for foreigners and, also, Firoz Tughluq and all other rulers of the Sultanate period from the beginning to the end; but from the middle of the 14th century the Indian Muslims begin to have a share, though a very slight share indeed, in the State services.

The Indian Muslim must for long have found himself in an unenviable position. He had little share in the administration of the country and had no place in the aristocracy of the ruling class. He was far inferior in wealth, position and innate pride to the vast majority of his Hindu countrymen. His only consolation was that he professed the same religion as his rulers and could pray with them on Fridays. His constant desire was to be treated on a footing of equality with his foreign co-religionists and to share their power and wealth. To attain his life's ambition he had to imitate foreign ways and style of living and even to abjure his ancestors. It was an irony of fate that owing to these reasons he was cut off from those who had once been his kinsmen, dead or alive, and was like an alien in his own motherland.

Main classes in Muslim community

The Muslim population was divided into two categories, namely, men of the sword and men of the pen. Those who belonged to the former category were soldiers and were mostly of foreign origin. They were either commanding officers or soldiers in the military establishment at the capital and in the provinces. They were graded into *khan*, *malik*, *amir*, *sipahsalar* and *sar-i-khail*. This was a descending hierarchy in which the *khan* occupied the highest place and *sar-i-khail* the lowest, and seems to have been only a paper organisation. In practice it had begun to disrupt quite early, so that in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries it had lost much of its significance. The men of the pen were mostly non-Turkish foreigners or their descendants. They supplied recruits to the clerical, educational and religious services. The most important section in this group was that of the ecclesiastics or theologians who were styled as the *ulema*. They were clergymen, teachers and judges and exercised considerable influence on the government and the rank and file of the Muslim society.

The lowest strata of the Muslim society was composed mainly of the artisan, the shopkeeper, the clerk and the petty trader. During this period Muslims were mostly confined to cities and very few lived in villages. Another element that might be included in this group was that of the slaves who were so many in that age. Every king and every noble and every well-to-do man, whether in service or in business, owned slaves who were employed in household work and in various royal *karkhanas*. There must have been many beggars among the Muslims, for poverty was looked upon as a road to piety.

The *ulema*

The most influential section of the Muslim literary class was

that which consisted of the ecclesiastics, that is, the theologians, who were called the *ulema*. They constituted the Muslim clergy. The clergy was not a hereditary body, nor did it consist of men belonging to any one race or country. There was, however, hardly any Muslim of Indian parentage among them; for, during our period, Indian Muslims did not reach the high distinction of a religious divine. Nevertheless the *ulema* were a "well-knit group and intensely conscious of their importance and jealous of their high privileges." They were to be found wherever there was a certain number of Muslim population in the country and they practically monopolised judicial, ecclesiastical and educational services. Some of them were teachers in private and government educational institutions, while others had established their own *madrsahs*. Quite a large number were *imams*, *khatibs*, *muhtasibs*, *muftis* and *qazis*, while certain others devoted their time and energy to religious propaganda. Not only all the historians of this period but almost all literary men belonged to this group. All these classes of ecclesiastics or *ulema* were supposed to be deeply learned in Islamic theology. It was open to any of them to give a ruling (*fatwa*) on any religious matter about which conflicting opinions were held.

The *ulema* from the time of the foundation of the Turkish rule were a highly influential class and were consulted by the Sultan and his ministers not only on important points of law but also on matters of State policy. They had, therefore, gradually acquired a position of great importance. They had come to believe that they had a right to be consulted in all matters, religious or secular. The early Sultans of Delhi were almost completely under their influence. Ala-ud-din Khalji was the first Sultan to show some independence and disregard of their advice. He openly declared that he did not care whether his conduct was in accordance with the spirit of the Islamic law; he did whatever he considered to be right and to be in the interest of the State, or suitable for an emergency. But his successors, being made of less stern stuff, reverted to the policy of consulting the *ulema* in all important matters. Muhammad bin Tughluq made light of the influence of this class during the early years of his reign; but he was so much harassed and vilified by the ecclesiastics that he had to confess his defeat and make amends during the later years of his rule. His successor, Firoz Tughluq, was held in thraldom to their will and could never act independently of their advice. The sway of the *ulema* over the mind of the Sultan was complete. Thereafter no strong Sultan arose who could challenge their authority.

The influence of the *ulema* on the state and their interference in political and administrative matters proved to be highly injurious. However learned the *ulema* might have been, they were not politicians or administrators. They approached problems from a narrow angle of vision. Hence their advice very often landed the ruler into difficulties. The influence of the *ulema* in religious matters, too, was baneful. They were a narrowminded class who preached war with the infidels and whose policy was one of extirpating not only idolatry but also heresy in Islam. Whenever a Sultan tried to act in conformity with the advice of the *ulema*, he had to become a religious fanatic and a persecutor of the religion of the vast majority of his subjects. The inevitable result was discontent and the undermining of the authority of the State.

THE HINDUS

Condition

The Hindus formed the vast majority of the population. Their numerical strength, in those days, could not have been less than 95 per cent of the population of the country. As before the advent of the Turks, they were rulers and in possession of the entire country, they held most of the land even during the Sultanate period. There were many well-to-do chiefs among them. The lower branches of administration, specially the department of revenue and finance, were manned by them. The *khuts*, *chaudharis* and *muqaddams* were all Hindus. The principal merchants, businessmen and traders as well as petty shopkeepers were mostly Hindus. They had almost monopolised the banking and money-lending professions. Multani traders and money-lenders are referred to in the contemporary chronicles. They lent money even to high Turkish officers and nobles. Hindu *banjaras* were attached to the armies, as, there being no regular commissariat arrangements, the provisions to the troops were supplied by these hereditary nomad merchants. A very considerable section among the Hindus was that of the agriculturists. Many must have followed the various professions, such as, teaching, medicine and the like. Brahmans, generally, must have devoted their time to studies and to administering to the religious needs of the people.

The Turkish process of conquest and subjugation of the country, being co-extensive with the period of its rule, lasted for over 350 years, during which lakhs of Hindus were killed, and lakhs were massacred after wars, and lakhs of their women and children were converted and sold as slaves. Timur, for instance, in one day

massacred one lakh of Hindu prisoners on the eve of his battle with Mahmud Tughluq. In no period of our history—not even in early or later British—was there such a wanton destruction of human life as during the 325 years of Turko-Afghan rule. Besides, the Turkish conquests deprived a considerable number of the upper and middle class Hindus of employment in state service, civil and military, which must have brought about a revolution in our society causing hardship to countless families. Politically and socially, the Hindus, as a people, had to suffer deeply during this period. Not only were they deprived of their position as rulers, ministers, governors and commanders of troops, but were also treated contemptuously. The Turkish Sultans and their principal followers sought their brides from well-to-do Hindu families and compelled the proud chiefs to part with their daughters. In accordance with the Muslim law, the Hindu girls were first deprived of their religion, converted to Islam, and then married. All this served as a perpetual humiliation to the proud Hindus who honestly believed, and not merely as a reaction caused by their defeat and degradation, that the newcomers were inferior to them in culture, in religion, in race and, above all, in matters of purity of conduct and morals and ways of life. The political and economic hardships, to which they were subjected by the conquerors, did not inflict upon them so much misery as the humiliating treatment, religious persecution and, above all, invasion on their family honour.

The Hindu society was caste-ridden. The Turkish rule compelled the Hindus to make the caste rules more rigorous than they were in free India. Owing to the Turkish hobby of seeking beautiful Hindu girls for wives, child-marriage became common. Seclusion of women became a general practice in the upper and middle class Hindu families. Widow remarriage was unthinkable in that age except among low caste people. Except in well-to-do families there seems to have been very little of female education. Elementary education for boys was, however, universal. In every village there was a school where reading, writing and arithmetic were taught. Some kind of military training must have also been in vogue. As it was beyond the strength of the Turkish government to disarm the Hindu population, the latter successfully made their own arrangements for the protection and defence of their villages. The Hindus were devoted to their religion. Though the intellectuals among them believed in the unity of God, a majority worshipped images.

People believed in superstition and had great faith in astrology, palmistry, magic and sorcery. Their moral and sexual character was very high. Loans taken were almost invariably repaid. If the debtor failed to pay, his son or grandson considered it his obligation to pay it back with interest. On the whole, the standard of individual honesty and purity of conduct was fairly high.

Of late it has become a fashion with a certain class of our modern writers to endeavour to show that the condition of the Hindus during the Turkish rule was good. One writer[1] has gone to the extent of saying that they were happier under Turkish rule than they had been for a long time under their own indigenous rulers. Doubtful epigraphic evidence has been produced in support of this new-fangled theory. If one or two instances of a Hindu here and there entertaining a favourable opinion about a particular Turkish ruler could be cited, there can be produced a thousand instances of ill-treatment and persecution from the pages of the Muslim historians themselves. Similarly, an attempt has been made to show that State service was open to the Hindus and that some of them were employed on fairly high posts; but when one examines the annals of the period, one fails to see a single Hindu enjoying the post of a governor or a minister or a secretary or even the post of a district officer or the head of a *pargana*. The Hindu *khuts*, *chaudharis* and *muqaddams* were hereditary revenue officers in the local areas without whose co-operation the administration could not be carried on. Inspite of a thorough search, two modern biographers of the liberal minded Muhammad bin Tughluq have not been able to find any other Hindu than one Ratan holding the position of importance during his reign. But the consequence resulting from the appointment of even one Hindu officer would throw lurid light on the narrowness and intolerance of the ruling oligarchy as well as of the Muslim population as a whole rather than establish the liberal character of the administration. Ratan's appointment to Sindh—not as governor, as Dr. Mahdi Husain says, but as a revenue officer—gave a rude shock to the arrogant Muslim population of the province. The notables among them hatched a conspiracy against him and brought about his murder. The first and the last Hindu notable to find a place at the court of Delhi, during the Sultanate period, was one Sidhapala who had come to importance not because the court's policy was to patronise Hindu nobility but because

[1] Dr. I. H. Qureshi; also Dr. Mahdi Husain.

Sidhapala's character was in keeping with that of the Turkish nobility, specially that of the *wazir* who was on the look-out for an ally to bring about the murder of his royal patron. Moreover, the Sultanate was then on its last legs. It was unthinkable for a Hindu occupying even a fourth-rate place at the court under any of the Khalji and Tughluq rulers. The employment of the Hindus in the armies of the Sultans, whether as soldiers or as petty officers, proves nothing, as they were employed as mercenaries, like the troops of other nationalities, as early as the time of Mahmud of Ghazni. If the Hindus were in possession of most of the land it was so because it could not be helped. No medieval government, however powerful, could have succeeded in dispossessing such a large and powerful community as the Hindu of its lands. The confidence of our ancestors is reflected in the medieval proverb: "Land is not a carpet that a foreigner or a Sultan will roll it up and take away on his shoulders." It is a pity that most of the Muslim writers refuse to appreciate the sentiments and sufferings of the indigenous population under the foreign rule. The wearer alone knows where the shoe pinches. Besides unimpeachable contemporary evidence, we have unbroken tradition coming down from hundreds of years that the Turkish rule was oppressive. At the time of a natural calamity the Hindu public used to cry out in agony: "Both God and Turk are after us." One can easily understand these sentiments, for religion and family honour—two of the dearest human possessions—were not safe during the Turkish rule. Years ago the author had several opportunities of hearing the comparison made by our rural people between the Turkish and the British rule. The British rule, according to them, was bad because it exploited the people economically; the Turkish rule was worse as it made unbecoming inroads on the people's religion and honour.

ECONOMIC CONDITION

During the medieval age our country was famous for her fabulous wealth. The story of our enormous riches tempted Mahmud of Ghazni and his plundering hordes to invade the prosperous capital of our kingdoms and sack our temples. One can easily believe from the contemporary accounts of the vast plunder acquired by Muhammad bin Qasim in Sindh and Multan and Mahmud of Ghazni in Hindustan proper—coined and uncoined money, precious stones of various kinds and a variety of other goods valued at crores of rupees —that the stories were not fairy tales and had foundation in fact.

That the early Turkish invaders did not completely drain away our wealth, much less uproot our sources of production, is clear from the enormous booty that the Sultans of Delhi gathered in their expeditions, both in northern and southern India and huge expenses incurred by them on their wars and the money lavished by them on their courts and households. And yet, there was left enough in the land to be carried away by Timur at the end of the 14th century from only one corner of our country, not in thousands but in hundreds of thousands. The economic prosperity of our country, during the Turko-Afghan period, is thus beyond question.

The main source of our wealth was agriculture. The natural fertility of the soil in most parts, copious rainfall and irrigation facilities provided since the early times and their systematical reinforcement by Firoz Tughluq, combined with the industry of our peasants led to the production of so much of corn that it not only supplied the need of the country but was also exported abroad. Rich crops, such as, cotton, sugar-cane, lintels, oilseeds, poppy, Indigo, etc., were produced on a large scale. Fruits of numerous variety were produced in many parts of the country. We have already seen in a previous chapter that a considerable portion of the revenues of Firoz Tughluq came from gardens. But, though agriculture was the occupation of the bulk of the people, there were many important industries in the rural as well as the urban areas. Centuries before the advent of the Turks, our country was industrially well organised. There were guilds and crafts in the villages and in towns which carried on widespread commerce. Inspite of the absence of State support, these industrial institutions survived the shocks of foreign invasions and internal revolutions. There were two kinds of industries—those that were under state patronage and those that were purely private. The Sultans had their own *karkhanas* or workshops in Delhi, which employed many thousands of weavers of silk and other stuffs. Every year thousands of yards of silk and cotton cloth were produced by the royal workshops for preparing robes of honour. There were other kinds of workshops, such as, those for gold and silver articles and embroidery, and so on. As for private industries, the most important among them were the textile industry, including the manufacture of cotton, woollen and silk cloth, dyeing industry, printing industry, calico printing industry, sugar industry, metal work, paper industry, stone and brick work and various other industries, such as inlay of stone work, enamelling etc. There were some minor industries, such

as, shoe-making, manufacture of arms, manufacture of liquors, brass and other metal industries and clay industry. Textile industries were common to all the provinces of the country; but Bangal and Gujarat were particularly renowned for the manufacture and export of textile goods.

Although during the Turko-Afghan period the State did not adopt a comprehensive economic policy with the object of improving the material condition of the people, yet the volume of trade, both internal and external, carried on by our countrymen, was enormous. India had commercial relations with the outside world. She exported agricultural goods, textile manufactures, both cotton and silk, and some other things, such as, tutenag, opium, indigo, etc. Her chief imports were horses, mules and articles of luxury for the royal family and nobility. It is clear that the value of her exports was much greater than that of the imports and the balance of trade was always in her favour. That was why it was generally believed that "Merchants of all countries never ceased to carry pure gold into India, and to bring back in exchange commodities of herbs and gums." We had, during this period, commercial relations with China, the Malay Islands and other countries in the Pacific Ocean which were connected with us by sea-routes. Our trade with Bhutan, Tibet, Afghanistan, Persia and other countries in Central Asia was carried on through land-routes.

But our wealth was unevenly distributed. In fact, it was concentrated in the hands of a small minority. The Sultans and their nobility and the high official class were enormously wealthy and so also were the Hindu rajas and chiefs and top-ranking Hindu merchants and bankers. We have seen that the salaries of important civil and military officers in the Sultanate period were very high. The officials and nobles lived in big mansions, were attended by a large array of servants and rolled in wealth and luxury. The middle class, which consisted of the professional men and important clerks and merchants, was also fairly well-to-do. But the masses, who, of course, formed the bulk of the population, were poor and did not have enough to satisfy their needs. It has been shown in the last chapter that the tiller of the soil was left with about one-third of his produce. The incidence of taxation fell heavily on him; but, it seems, that in normal times he did not starve. His wants were few, in fact, fewer than he has in our day and things of everyday use were much cheaper. But, when there was famine, whether due to failure of rains or some other natural calamity or due to destruction of crops

owing to military expeditions, common people died in hundreds and, sometimes, in thousands. Famines did occur during the period—for example, one in the time of Jalal-ud-din Firoz Khalji when hundreds of people drowned themselves into the Yamuna, and another in the Doab in the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq which, too, was very severe and caused a considerable loss of life.

Owing to the difficult means of communications, prices were not uniform in the various parts of the country. It should not, of course, be expected that they could be uniform throughout the period. In normal times things were very cheap; but, in times of famine and scarcity, prices of goods rose abnormally high. For example, during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq when a famine occurred grain was sold at sixteen to seventeen *jitals* a seer. Similarly, prices would go up during war. When Firoz Tughluq invaded Sindh for the second time, the price of grain there rose to eight to ten *jitals* per seer. During Ala-ud-din's reign the prices of most of the articles of daily use were considered as normal. At that time wheat used to sell at seven and a half *jitals* per maund, barley four *jitals*, rice five *jitals*, pulses five *jitals*, white sugar one hundred *jitals* a maund, soft sugar sixty *jitals* a maund, oil-seeds three *jitals* a maund, mutton ten *jitals* a maund and ghee sixteen *jitals* a maund. The prices of various kinds of cloth were : muslin of Delhi cost seventeen *tankas* a piece, that of Aligarh six *tankas* and a fine blanket cost thirty-six *jitals*, while a coarse one six *jitals*. Prices were exceptionally low during the later years of the reign of Sikandar Lodi and throughout that of Ibrahim Lodi. During Ibrahim's time one could purchase ten maunds of grain, five seers of oil and ten yards of coarse cloth for one *Bahloli*, a coin introduced by Bahlol Lodi and equivalent to one-sixth of a *jital* in value. Nowhere were the things of everyday use cheaper than Bangal which the Turks considered as a "hell crammed with good things."

(In short, the general prosperity of the country is testified to by contemporary sources, both Indian and foreign.) Among the foreign travellers the names of Marco Polo, who visited southern India between 1288 and 1293, Ibn Battuta, who travelled in most parts of our country between 1334 and 1342, and Mahuan, (a Chinese, who visited Bangal in 1406,) are of special interest, as all of them have left an account of the country which shows that / both industrially and economically India was prosperous and that there was a "great abundance of all the necessaries of life.",

LITERATURE

Persian literature

A modern writer[2] has recently advanced a claim on behalf of the Sultanate of Delhi that it was a culture-State. Older historians, on the other hand, cling to the opinion that the period (1206—1526), from literary and cultural points of view, was entirely barren. Both the theories represent extreme views and, therefore, miss the truth. For a government that was theocratic and was based on naked force, whose personnel was almost completely foreign and which borrowed its language, culture and ideology and, even inspiration, from a foreign land and spurned and repressed those of their adopted country and of ninety-five per cent of its population, it cannot but be a tall claim to be looked upon as a culture-State. Culture and religious fanaticism go ill together. On the contrary, it will be unjust to think that the Sultans of Delhi and their nobles were semi-civilised fighters, devoid of interest in literature, poetry and the arts. Though primarily a military people, our Turko-Afghan rulers patronised Islamic learning and arts. There were Persian writers and poets, philosophers and logicians, theologians and lawyers at the court of almost every Sultan from Qutub-ud-din Aibak down to Sikandar Lodi. Some of them had even chronicles. The most important names of the latter category are Hasan Nizami, the author of the *Taj-ul-Maasir*; Minhaj-ud-din Siraj, the author of the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*; Zia-ud-din Barani, the author of the *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi* and the *Fatwah-i-Jahandari*; Shams-i-Siraj Afif, the author of *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi*; Yahya Bin Ahmad, the author of the *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi*; and Isami (Dakhin), the author of the *Futuh-us-Salatin*. Besides, there were writers of semi-historical works, such as, Amir Khusrav and Ain-ul-mulk Multani. It is unnecessary to recount the names of numerous poets and theologians of the age. The most notable among them were two, namely, Amir Khusrav and Amir Hasan Dihalvi. Amir Khusrav's original name was Muhammad Hasan and he was born at Patiala in 1253 A.D. His father was a Turkish refugee who had taken shelter there a few years before. Amir Khusrav took up service as a court-poet under Prince Muhammad Khan, the eldest son of Balban, and, thereafter, served successive Sultans from Balban to Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq. Later in his life he abandoned the world and became a disciple of Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Auliya. He was a prolific writer and is said to have written more than four lakhs of

[2] I. H. Qureshi.

couplets. He was, unquestionably, the greatest of the Indian poets writing in Persian. He wrote a number of prose books also. The most well-known of this category are the *Khazain-ul-Futuh*, *Tughluqnama*, and the *Tarikh-i-Alai*. He was the first Muslim writer to make use of Hindi words and to adopt Indian poetic imagery and themes. Unfortunately, his lead was not followed by the later writers who deliberately stuck to foreign vocabulary, poetic imagery and themes. Amir Hasan Dihalvi, whose full name was Najm-ud-din Hasan, was, like Khusrav, a poet of great ability and genius. He migrated to Daultabad where he died in 1338. At the provincial courts, too, there were poets and scholars who produced a crop of literature in Persian. The writers of this period derived their inspiration from Arabia and Persia, blindly imitated foreign writers and abandoned the lead given by the great poet, Amir Khusrav, by following the notorious practice of 'Matruk' which enjoined deliberate weeding out of words of Indian origin from their compositions. Indian themes, Indian poetic imagery and Indian heroes, mountains and rivers were all tabooed. The Sultans, thus, though lovers of literature and art, patronised the culture of a rather limited type. Moreover, all cultural activity was confined to the court and to the nobility; it did not touch the people.

Although the Sultans did not consider it to be their duty to educate the public, they took interest in establishing schools and *madrsahs*, which might be called colleges, for the education of their Muslim subjects. As a rule, an elementary school was attached to every mosque where reading and writing of Persian, besides instructions in the *Quran*, were taught. In the *madrsahs*, which were to be found in important towns, such as, Delhi, Agra, Jalandhar and Firozabad and, at a later stage, at the capitals of independent provincial dynasties, higher literature, poetry, theology, philosophy and some other branches of knowledge were imparted. Libraries were also established at prominent centres of learning, the most important of them being the royal library at Delhi. Amir Khusrav was appointed librarian of this library by Jalal-ud-din Khalji. When, owing to the pressure of the Mongol expansion; learned scholars from Central Asia flocked to Delhi, it became the unrivalled centre of Islamic learning in the East.

Very few Muslims cared to study Sanskrit. After Al-Beruni we do not come across any outstanding Muslim name connected with Sanskrit learning. One or two Sultans, such as Firoz Tughluq and Sikandar Lodi, ordered the translation of a few Sanskrit works into Persian. It is erroneously supposed that it amounted to a patronage

of Sanskrit literature and Sanskrit writers. The works translated were of practical interest. We have no evidence whatever to show that there was any Sanskrit scholar at the court of any of the Sultans of Delhi. Provincial rulers, specially in Bangal, did, however, encourage translation of Sanskrit works.

Sanskrit and Hindi literatures

The Hindu cultural activity was confined to the courts of the Hindu rajas and to our chief centres of learning and pilgrimage. It is natural that during an age of upheaval and insecurity, lacking in royal patronage, no great and immortal literary work that could compare with the masterpieces of Kalidasa, Bhavabhuti and Bana or of Tulsidas and Sur of a later age, could be produced by the Hindus. Yet it would be a mistake to suppose that the Hindu mind had become sterile as the result of Turkish conquest. The Hindus did not recognise Turkish superiority in the sphere of cultural and artistic activity. He went on with his own literary enterprise without minding the cramping effect produced on his mind by foreign conquest. The result was an abundant production of religious and philosophic literature, though not of the highest excellence. Ramanuja produced his commentaries on the *Brahmasutra* and Parthasarathi wrote a number of books on *Karma Mimansa*. The most important of these was *Shastra Dipika*. Jayadeva produced his famous *Gita Govinda* in the twelfth century. Several dramas were composed, such as, *Harakeli Nataka*, *Lalitavigraharaja Nataka*, *Prasanna Raghava* by Jayadeva in about 1200 A.D., *Hamir Mad-mardana* by Jai Singh Suri during 1219-1229, *Pradyumna-abhyudaya* of Ravi Varman, *Prataprudra Kalyan* of Vidyanath, *Parwati Parinaya* by Vaman Bhatta Bana, *Gangadas Pratap Vilas* by Gangadhar and *Vidagdha Madhava* and *Lalita Madhava* by Rup Goswami. One of the most notable works of Hindu law, named *Mitakshara*, was produced by Vijnanesvara during this period. Another work of law was *Dayabhaga* produced by Jimuta Vahana. The great astronomer, Bhaskaracharya flourished in this age. There were many commentators of *Yoga*, *Vaisesika* and *Nyaya* systems of our philosophy. Logic was also cultivated. Buddhist and Jain writers produced a number of works on logic. The greatest Jain logician of the period was Deva Suri. There were many religious reformers, and the Bhakti movement was the special product of the age. The court of Vijayanagar patronised Sanskrit learning on a large scale. There lived in that empire many notable scholars. The most important among them was Sayana, the commentator of the

Vedas. While every form of literature in Sanskrit was cultivated during the period, little attention was paid to historical composition and only one treatise that might be called a chronicle was Kalhan's *Rajatarangini* which was written about the middle of twelfth century A.D.

Hindi literature began to come into vogue during this period. Chand Bardai, Prithviraj's court poet, was one of the earliest writers of Hindi. He produced his famous work entitled *Prithviraj Raso*. Another poet was Sarangdhar who wrote two big poems about Hamir of Ranthambhor, called *Hamir Raso* and *Hamir Kavya*. Jagnayaka wrote a long poem, called *Alhakhanda*, which describes in stirring language the exploits of Alha and Udal, the two brave warriors of the Chandel king, Pramardi Deva of Mahoba. Amir Khusrav is considered by some critics as a Hindi poet also. Maithil literature, too, was greatly developed. One of the greatest writers of this language was Vidyapati Thakur who flourished towards the end of the fourteenth century and wrote works in Sanskrit, Hindi and Maithil. Many Bangali scholars produced a crop of literature. Raghunandan Misra's work on *Smriti* is too well-known to be mentioned in detail. Mirabai composed poems in Rajasthani. Several Marathi poets, notable among whom was Namadeva, flourished during the age. Guru Nanak produced verses in Panjabi. The bhakti movement became responsible for the growth and expansion of our modern Indian languages.

Urdu language

A common language that gradually began to emerge as a consequence of contact between the foreign Turks and other Central Asian peoples on the one hand and the Hindus on the other had its birth during this period. This was originally called *Zaban-i-Hindavi* and subsequently Urdu. It was a dialect of the western Hindi spoken for centuries in the neighbourhood of Delhi and Meerut. The grammatical structure of this language is Indian; but gradually it began to have a preponderating vocabulary of Persian and Arabic words. Amir Khusrav is considered to have been the first Muslim writer who used this language as a vehicle for the expression of his poetic ideas. It was not patronised by the Turkish rulers during this age, as they favoured Persian and not this hybrid, though indigenous, product.

THE BHAKTI MOVEMENT

According to ancient Hindu thought salvation or freedom from the bondage of birth and death, which is the ultimate end of human life, can be attained by three means, namely, *gyana* (knowledge),

karma (action) and *bhakti* (devotion). During the period of the Sultanate of Delhi a series of Hindu religious thinkers and reformers set on foot a movement for religious reform which emphasised the last, namely devotion, which became known as the Bhakti movement. It will, thus, be seen that the movement was not altogether new and it did not owe its origin to Islam as has been erroneously supposed by some modern writers. What really happened was that this movement received impetus from the presence of iconoclastic Muslim preachers who vehemently criticised the Hindu religion and thought. The history of the movement goes back to the time of the great reformer, Shankaracharya, who successfully combated Buddhism and gave Hinduism a common solid philosophical background. He established a logical monistic system and laid emphasis on the first of the three methods of attaining salvation, namely, knowledge. But this failed to evoke a hearty response from the common people. Anxious to attract the popular mind towards Hinduism and make it a living and active force in the life of the common people, our religious thinkers of the medieval age laid stress on the third means, namely, *bhakti* (devotion). As a vast majority of the Hindus could not pursue careers of material, political and cultural advancement under the alien rule, a dominant feature of the bhakti movement was 'escapism'. The people as well as the leaders of the movement sought solace in other-worldliness.

The earliest exponent of this school of religious thought was a great *Vaishnava* teacher, Ramanuja, who flourished in the early years of the twelfth century. He did his best to popularise the cult of devotion to a personal God and preached that salvation can be had by this means alone. The next reformer was Ramananda, a follower of the Ramanuja school, who was born in a Kanyakubja family of Allahabad. A worshipper of Rama, he preached the doctrine of *bhakti* to people of all castes and to both the sexes. He had twelve principal disciples, one of whom was a barber (Saindasa), another a cobbler (Raidasa) and the third a Muhammadan weaver (Kabir). The third teacher of the school was Vallabhacharya who was a worshipper of Krishna and, therefore, an exponent of the Krishna cult. He was born near Banaras in 1479 and his parents were Telugu Brahmans who had come to northern India for pilgrimage and settled here. He was a man of remarkable literary talent even in his early life. After completing his education at Kashi, he went to the court of Krishnadeva Raya of Vijayanagar where

he won a victory over some scholarly followers of *Shaivism*. He preached monism of the pure type, known, technically, as *shuddhadwaita* or pure non-duality. He became very popular with the common people; but, later on, abuses appeared among his followers who were mostly well-to-do people and, eventually, it became 'the Epicureanism of the East'.

The greatest saint of the bhakti movement was Chaitanya who was born in a learned Brahman family of Nadia in Bangal in 1485. From his early life he showed literary ability of a high order. At the age of twenty-four he renounced the world, became a *sadhu* and spent the rest of his life in preaching his message of love and devotion. He travelled over most parts of the country, both in the north and in the south, and spent a considerable time at Vrindaban. The essence of his teaching has been summed up thus : "If a creature adores Krishna and serves his *guru*, he is released from the meshes of illusion and attains to Krishna's feet..." This leads him to rise above the fetters of this world. "He believed that through love and devotion, song and dance, a state of ecstasy could be produced in which the personal presence of God would be realised." Chaitanya was opposed to the domination of the priests and to outward forms and ceremonies of religion. He preached to all irrespective of caste and creed. His influence was so profound and lasting that he is considered by his followers as an incarnation of Vishnu. He died in 1533.

Another preacher of the bhakti movement was Namadeva. He was a Maharashtrian and his followers belonged to all castes and classes, including a few Muslim converts to Hinduism. He belonged to the caste of tailors and flourished in the first half of the fifteenth century. Like other reformers of the age, he had faith in the unity of God and was against image-worship and priestly ritualism. He believed that one could attain salvation only through love of God.

Of the notable exponents of the bhakti cult, two, namely, Kabir and Nanak, stood definitely for a compromise between Hinduism and Islam. Kabir's early life is shrouded in mystery. He is said to have been born of a Brahman widow of Banaras who left him near a tank from where he was picked up by a Muhammadan weaver. Scholars differ about his date of birth. It seems almost certain that he flourished towards the close of the fifteenth century. From his early life he was a boy of meditative turn of mind and thoroughly religious, though in an unconventional sense. He is said to have become a disciple of Ramananda. Kabir might have been only

nominally a Muslim, for his poems are, beyond the shadow of doubt, saturated with the Hindu religious and philosophical thought of a high order. He was also influenced by the *sufi* thought and practices. Kabir led the life of a householder and performed the daily duties of his life, and yet he was a *bhakta* of eminence. He preached the religion of love to all people irrespective of caste and creed and made it the main concern of his life to promote unity between Hinduism and Islam. Like other reformers of the bhakti cult, he was against caste and ritual and the external formalities of religion. He was a firm believer in the theory that salvation could be attained only through love and devotion to God. So he believed in *bhajana* and condemned all kinds of sham, insincerity and hypocrisy. The following poem of Kabir admirably sums up his teachings :

If God be within the mosque, then to whom does this world belong ?
If Rama be within the image, then who is there to know what happens without ?
Hari is in the east; Allah is in the west. Look within your own heart, for there you will find both Karim and Rama.
All the men and women of the world are His living forms.
Kabir is the child of Allah and Rama; He is my guru; He is my pir.
Vain, too, are the distinctions of caste.
All shades of colour are but broken arcs of light.
All varieties in human nature are but fragments of humanity.
The right to approach God is not the monopoly of Brahmans, but belong to all who are sincere of heart.

Guru Nanak, like Kabir, preached harmony between Hinduism and Islam. He was born of Khatri parents in 1469 at the village of Talwandi (modern Nankana), thirty-five miles to the south-west of Lahore and situated in the Shaikhupura district of the West Panjab. His father was a *patwari*. Nanak was given formal education and employed as an assistant to his brother-in-law, Jai Rama of Sultanpur Lodi, who was a grain merchant in the service of Daulat Khan Lodi. But his accounts fell into disorder, and he left service. At Sultanpur Lodi began his religious career and his first notable saying to attract attention was : "There is no Hindu and no Musalman." He spent the rest of his life in preaching and wandering over the country and even beyond as far as Mecca and Madina. He died in 1538 at Kartarpur in the Jalandhar Doab. Nanak had married, lived the life of a householder and had two sons. He believed that married life was not a bar to spiritual progress. He preached the gospel of universal toleration and was against external formalities of Hinduism

and against caste and religious fanaticism. His message was one of unity of God and personal love for him. He had both Hindu and Muslim disciples. He nominated Angada, one of his disciples, as his successor who gave unity and organisation to his followers. Gradually they became known as the Sikhs.

The bhakti cult was a widespread movement and embraced the whole of the country. It was a movement of the people and aroused intense interest among them. Perhaps, after the decline of Buddhism, there had never been a more widespread and popular movement in our country than the bhakti movement. It had two main objects in view. One was to reform the Hindu religion so as to enable it to withstand the onslaught of Islamic propaganda and proselytism. Its second object was to bring about reconciliation between Hinduism and Islam and to foster friendly relations between the two communities. It succeeded in realising the first object by bringing about the simplification of worship and liberalisation of the traditional caste rules. The high and the low among the Hindu public forgot many of their prejudices and believed in the message of the reformers that all people were equal in the eyes of God and that birth was no bar to religious salvation. The movement failed in achieving its second object, namely, Hindu-Muslim unity. Neither the Turko-Afghan rulers nor the Muslim public accepted the Rama-Sita creed. They refused to believe that Rama and Rahim, Ishwara and Allah were the names of the same God. The movement, however, incidentally became responsible for another solid achievement, namely, the evolution and enrichment of our vernacular literatures. The reformers preached to the masses through their mother-tongue and, therefore, gradually enriched our modern languages, such as, Hindi, Bangali, Marathi, Maithil, etc. The period of bhakti movement, therefore, proved to be a golden period in the history of the growth of our vernacular literatures.

THE FINE ARTS

We have little evidence about the cultivation of art, other than architecture, during the Sultanate period. One, however, comes across stray and infrequent references to ornamental designs painted on walls or engraved on furniture, arms and saddles and embroidered on flags and costumes. Besides, ornamental pottery and metal work were well developed. Inlaid metal basins, porcelains and bidri vessels and profusely decorated brass and silver pots were used in the royal household and also in the houses of the nobles and high officials.

But, owing to the Quranic prohibition, the art of painting proper was shunned by the Sultans and the Muslim nobility. Nonetheless, the art of calligraphy was widely practised. Music, though disliked by orthodox Muslims for religious reasons, had such irresistible appeal that it could not altogether be banished. There were, therefore, some musicians of note during the period among whom the great poet, Amir Khusrav, occupies the first place. He set some of his poems to the Indian tunes and is even reputed to have invented new *ragas*.

Architecture

The Sultans were great lovers of architecture. By the time of the Turkish conquest of our country the various races of Central Asia had developed a style of architecture which was the result of the fusion of indigenous styles of architecture with those of Trans-Oxiana, Iran, Afghanistan, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Northern Africa and the countries of the south-western Europe on the one hand and Muslim Arabia on the other. The architecture brought by our Turkish conquerors to India in the last decade of the twelfth century was, thus, not exclusively Muslim or even Arabian. The distinctive features of this imported architecture were : (1) the dome, (2) lofty towers or minarets, (3) the arch, and (4) the vault. When the Turks came to our country they found a highly developed indigenous style in the land. Nevertheless, being conquerors, they naturally introduced in the country their own ideas and forms and also the method of construction of buildings; but they did not succeed in erecting buildings that could be exact copies of their prototype in Central Asia. Their buildings were greatly influenced by indigenous art traditions, and, hence, the new architecture that emerged was neither completely foreign nor purely Indian. The amalgamation of the foreign and the indigenous architectural styles was made possible by certain factors. Firstly, our foreign rulers had to employ Indian craftsmen and sculptors who had their own clear ideas about the form and method of construction and, therefore, unconsciously introduced into Muslim buildings many decorative and architectural details which had been in vogue in this country for centuries in the past. Secondly, the early conquerors almost invariably built their mosques, palaces and even tombs out of the materials of Hindu and Jain temples which they had callously destroyed. This, without doubt, modified in execution the foreign models which they might have had in view. Thirdly, notwithstanding, the striking contrasts

between the Muslim and Hindu styles, their buildings resemble in some particulars and, therefore, the Turkish Sultans sometimes converted the Hindu and Jain temples into mosques by demolishing their flat roofs and providing domes and minarets in their place. In the words of Sir John Marshall, one feature common to Hindu temples and Muslim mosques was "the open court encompassed by chambers or colonnades, and such temples as were built on this plan naturally lent themselves to conversion into mosques and would be the first to be adapted for that purpose by the conquerors. Again, a fundamental characteristic that supplied a common link between the styles was the fact that both Islamic and Hindu arts were inherently decorative. Ornament was as vital to the one as to the other; both were dependent on it for their very being."

The first architectural construction erected by Qutub-ud-din Aibak was the well-known Quwat-ul-Islam mosque at Delhi which was begun in 1195 and finished in 1199. It was built on the plinth of a Hindu temple and out of the materials of twenty-seven Hindu and Jain shrines. Most of the columns, shafts and capitals of this mosque were originally parts of Hindu temples and were hurriedly adapted to the needs of a Muslim mosque. The images and carvings on the columns, shafts and capitals were either defaced or concealed by being turned upside down. The only Islamic features of this building are the presence of a screen in front, with Muslim designs and ornaments, and a calligraphic reproduction of the Quranic text. The next Turkish building erected at Ajmer is also a mosque. It is known as Dhai Din ka Jhonpra. This too was built by Qutub-ud-din Aibak. The building was originally a Sanskrit college and temple built by the great emperor Vigraharaja Visaldeva. The upper parts of it were demolished and domes and arches were erected. Even a casual visitor can notice countless human figures on the pillars, and even on the graves inside, with defaced faces and hands and feet. The third important Turkish architecture is the Qutub Minar which was planned by Aibak a little before 1199 and completed by Iltutmish. It was originally intended to serve as a place for the *muazzin* to call the 'faithful' to prayer, but later on became famous as a tower of victory. This building is essentially Islamic in form and design. Iltutmish, besides completing the Qutub Minar, added some buildings of his own, the most prominent among them being a tomb built on the grave of his eldest son, known as Sultan Ghari. Unlike the Qutub Minar, this building, being the first tomb erected

by the Turks, is more Hindu in architectural details and decorative *motif* than any other tomb in existence. From the time of Iltutmish the buildings of the Sultanate began to show a marked increase in Islamic elements. That monarch extended the Quwat-ul-Islam mosque and put up a screen in the building. He made some additions to the Dhai Din ka Jhonpara also. Balban built his palace, known as the Red Palace. His tomb at Delhi is purely Muslim in execution. The arch in the entrance of the tomb is the best so far erected by the Turks in the country. The Khalji monarch, Ala-ud-din, was a great builder and erected many buildings. Two of his buildings are notable. They are a mosque called Jamait Khan Masjid at the shrine of Nizam-ud-din Auliya and the famous Alai Darwaza at the Qutub Minar. Both these show a preponderance of Muslim architectural ideas. The buildings of the Tughluq period do not possess that splendour which characterised those of the so-called Slave and the Khalji dynasties. They are simple, formal, prosaic and even austere. The change seems to be due to two reasons. The Tughluq Sultans were hard pressed for money and could not afford to spend huge sums on buildings. Moreover, they were puritanical in their taste and people of religious outlook. Their buildings are characterised by sloping walls and by heavy and dark appearance. The important specimens of the Tughluq architecture are the tomb of Tughluq Shah, the city of Tughluqabad and Kotla Firoz Shah. The Sayyids and the Lodis tried to revive the splendour and the grace of the Khalji period, but they attained only qualified success. In the opinion of a competent critic, they could not "shake off the deadening effect of the Tughluq period." The best of the Pathan buildings is the Moth ki Masjid built by the prime minister of Sikandar Lodi. According to critics, this is the finest specimen of the architecture of the Lodis.

Provincial architectures

The rulers of the various provincial dynasties that came into existence on the decline of the Sultanate under the later Tughluqs were also builders of palaces, mosques and tombs. Though in essential features the various provincial styles resemble that of Delhi, they differ from it, and among themselves, in some important details. The Delhi architecture, for example, was more remarkably splendid than that of many a provincial kingdom, the rulers of which could not afford to spend as much money as the Sultans of Delhi. Moreover, the provincial styles of architecture were modified by the local

art traditions of pre-Turkish period that still held the field and also by the peculiar conditions that obtained in various provinces.

Multan. This province, having been for centuries under continuous Muslim rule, possesses several monuments of note. The earliest buildings were two mosques, the first of which was built by Muhammad bin Qasim and the second was erected on the site of the famous temple of Aditya which was demolished by the Karmathians. There are three important shrines in Multan, namely, the shrine of Shah Yusuf-ul-Gardizi (built about 1152), the mausoleum of Bahaul Haqq (built in 1262), and the tomb of Shams-ud-din, popularly known as Shams-i-Tabrizi (built after 1276). There is a fourth shrine, namely, the tomb of Rukn-i-Alam, built by Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq (between 1320 and 1324). The above three buildings have suffered greatly from the ravages of time and had to be reconstructed. The last shrine is considered as "one of the most splendid memorials ever erected in the honour of the dead." The building is largely Persian in design.

Bangal. Although Bangal was so rich and her artists possessed of an inborn sense of art and adaptability of character, the local Sultans did not succeed in developing a first-rate style of architecture. Their buildings were largely made of bricks and stone was very sparingly used. The architecture was characterised by "the use of pointed arches on short pillars and the Muslim's adaptation of the traditional Hindu temple style of curvilinear cornices copied from the bamboo structures, and of beautifully carved Hindu symbolic decorative designs like the lotus." The ruins of these buildings are found at Gaur or Lakhanauti, Tribeni and Pandua. The earliest specimens of the Bangal style of architecture are the tomb and mosque of Zafar Khan Ghazi, which were built mostly out of the materials from the Hindu temples. The well-known Adina Masjid was built by Sikandar Shah at Pandua in the second half of the fourteenth century. It was a very huge and ambitious structure, and, though considered in Bangal as one of the wonders of the world, its design, in the opinion of Sir John Marshall, is "far from being worthy of its size." Another beautiful building is the tomb of Jalal-ud-din Muhammad Shah, which is considered to be one of the finest tombs in Bangal. The Dakhil Darwaza at Gaur is "as perfect an example of brick structure as can be found anywhere in the world." The other well-known structures are the Lotan Masjid, the Bara Sona Masjid, the Chhota Sona Masjid and the Qadam Rasul mosque. Of

these the Bara Sona Masjid "has the merit of greater simplicity and impressiveness." The Bangal style is a class by itself and is inferior to most of the other provincial styles in design, execution, finish and decoration.

Gujarat. The Gujarat style was probably the finest and the most beautiful among the provincial architectures. Before the advent of the Turks the province had already a beautiful indigenous style. The Turkish conquerors utilised the local talent and erected beautiful buildings which were characterised by the use of fine wood carving, delicate stone lattice work and profuse ornamentation. The capital city of Ahmadabad, founded by Ahmad Shah, was enriched by a number of lofty buildings which were built largely out of the materials of the old temples and buildings. One of the best examples of the Gujarat style is the well-known Jami Masjid at Ahmadabad erected by Ahmad Shah in 1411. It has fifteen domes which are supported on two hundred pillars. Another equally beautiful building is the tomb of Ahmad Shah. The city of Champaner, also, contains remarkable buildings, including a grand mosque built by Mahmud Begarha and the palaces in the fort. Dr. Burgess lavishes praise on the Gujarat style and says that it combines "all the beauty and finish of the native art with a certain magnificence which is deficient in their own works."

Malwa. The province of Malwa also evolved a distinctive style of its own. There are two remarkable mosques at Dhar, the ancient capital of the kingdom. One of these was originally a Sanskrit college attached to which was a Hindu temple. It is even now known as Bhojashala. It was converted into a mosque. The other mosque also is built out of the materials of old Hindu buildings. Both the mosques betray great Hindu influence. Its pillars and tombs are Hindu in form; but the buildings of Mandu, which was established as a capital by the local Sultans, are peculiarly Muslim in design and execution and bear a close resemblance to those of Delhi. The most notable buildings of Mandu, which is fortified by strong stone walls, are the Jami Masjid, the Hindola Mahal, the Jahaz Mahal, Husang Shah's tomb and the palaces of Baz Bahadur and Rupmati. The Jami Masjid was planned and begun by Husang Shah, but it was completed by Mahmud Khalji. The Darbar Hall, which is popularly known as Hindola Mahal, was also, probably, erected by Husang Shah. Husang Shah's is the first great tomb in the country built wholly of white marble. The Jahaz Mahal, with

its arched walls, roofed pavilions and beautiful reservoirs, is one of the most conspicuous buildings in Mandu. The palaces of Baz Bahadur and Rupmati are built high up on the plateau overlooking the Narmada. In short, Mandu "is, of all the fortress cities of India, the most magnificent."

Jaunpur. The Sharqi dynasty of Jaunpur was responsible for great patronage of architecture. The buildings erected by the Sultans are characterised by a synthesis of Hindu and Muslim architectural ideas. The buildings of this style are noted for their "massive sloping walls, square pillars, small galleries and cloisters." The mosques of Jaunpur, which were built out of the materials of the demolished Hindu temples, have no minarets of the usual Muslim type. One of the brilliant specimens of the Sharqi style is the Atala Devi Masjid which was begun in 1377 and completed in 1408. The next is the Jami Masjid which was built by Husain Shah (1452-78). The third is the Lal Darwaza mosque. The other notable buildings are the broken facade of the Jhanjheeri and the Khalis Mukhlis.

Kashmir. In the remote valley of Kashmir the local Sultans adopted the old Hindu tradition of stone and wooden architecture. They supplemented it with structural forms and decorative *motifs* peculiarly associated with Islam. The result was that in Kashmir, as elsewhere, there was a harmonious blending of the Hindu and Muslim architectural ideas. Some of the important buildings there belong to the reign of Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-1470). The tomb of Mandani, with the adjacent mosque in Srinagar, is considered to be a beautiful specimen of Kashmir art. The Jami Masjid at Srinagar built by Sikandar, the *Butshikan*, and extended by Zain-ul-Abidin "is still an instructive example of the pre-Mughal style." Another building is the mosque of Shah Hamadan in Srinagar which is built exclusively of timber.

Dakhin. The Bahamani Sultans of the Dakhin were patrons of art. They brought into existence a peculiar style of architecture which was a mixture of a number of elements, such as, Indian, Turkish, Egyptian and Persian. The mosques at Gulbarga and Bidar are beautiful specimens of this art; but the most remarkable Dakhin architecture is found at Bijapur. The magnificent mausoleum of Muhammad Adil Shah, popularly known as Gol Gumbaz, is built after a peculiar style in which the Turkish art ideas have a preponderating influence. There are other equally celebrated buildings, such as, the Jami Masjid at Gulbarga, the Chand Minar at Daultabad

and the college of Mahmud Gawan at Bidar. Most of the buildings of the Bahamani Sultans were built on the site, and out of the materials of demolished Hindu temples and, therefore, it was impossible to avoid Hindu influence. According to Sir John Marshall, in the early stages of the evolution of the Bahamanide art the native Dakhin had to struggle hard for its existence; but from about the end of the 15th century it began to reassert itself. The Indian genius, thus, ultimately rose superior to foreign influence.

Hindu architecture

As has been said, the Hindus had developed architecture to perfection before the advent of the Turks. The distinctive features of the Hindu architecture are : (1) narrow columns, (2) pilasters, (3) corbel brackets, (4) tapering arch built on the cantilever principle, and (5) ornamental designs. Hindu buildings were generally mysterious and were not broad and open. Our rulers were fond of temples and Sanskrit colleges. They did not seem to have bestowed much attention on their palaces. The medieval specimens of Hindu architecture in northern India are to be found in Rajasthan, particularly in Mewar. Most of the rulers of Mewar were patrons of art and architecture. Rana Kumbha erected numerous forts and other buildings. The most beautiful and well-known among them are the fort of Kumbhalgarh and the Kirti Stambha or Jaya Stambha (pillar of victory). This pillar is one of the most remarkable towers in the country. It is built partly of red sand-stone and partly of white marble and is enriched by numerous images of Hindu gods and goddesses with inscriptions engraved at the bottom of each. There is another pillar at Chittor, known as Jai Stambha, which is embellished with beautiful carving and lattice work. At Amber, near Jaipur, there are ruins of old buildings belonging to this period and, so also, in several other States of Rajasthan. The rulers of the Vijayanagar empire were celebrated for their patronage of art. They built council chambers, palaces, public offices, temples and aqueducts, which were considered to be work of great beauty and excited the admiration of foreign travellers. According to Fergusson, the *Vitthala* temple of Krishnadeva Raya is "the finest building of its kind in southern India."

The Hindu architecture of this period seems to have remained uninfluenced by Islamic ideas. It was not until after the advent of the Mughuls that our architects and artists came under the influence of Islamic art.

21

THE SULTANATE IN RETROSPECT

Rapid over-running of Hindustan

When one looks back on the history of the conquest of our country by the Turks, one is struck by the fact that most parts of northern India were so easily over-run by the foreign hordes. It is amazing to read that Mahmud of Ghazni would repeat his annual raids, penetrate into the heart of our country, plunder our prosperous cities and wealthy temples and return to Ghazni without being effectively punished, much less checked. One would hardly believe that our political and military condition was so rotten that the invader could not be decisively beaten even once and prevented from repeating his audacious raids. Nevertheless, this is a fact of history that Mahmud was never really decisively defeated by any Hindu ruler. On the other hand, it is equally true that the Indian soldier was not in any way inferior to the Turk. In fact, in courage, in sheer bravery and disregard and contempt of death, he was superior to his Turkish adversary. Nor were our Rajput rulers, in any sense of the term, cowards or lacking in soldierly qualities. What could, then, be the cause of our country having been over-run so easily from the Indus to Banaras within a short space of thirty years by the Ghaznavide hordes ? The first and foremost cause seems to be the fact that the country having been parcelled out into numerous independent States, it was nobody's concern to make effective arrangements for the protection of the north-western frontier and to check the progress of the invader. While the Hindushahi king of the Panjab fought to resist Mahmud within his own territory, he did not think it to be his business to prevent his march into the dominions of his neighbours. The same was the attitude of the king of Kanauj and the vicious circle went on. An effective combination of all, or most of our rulers, was an impossibility in that age, for they were not on good terms with one another. Secondly, the masses had developed an attitude of unconcern towards politics, the rise and fall of empires and coming and going of rulers. They did not care as to who their rulers were.

They went on tilling their fields without minding the great conflicts between our rulers and the invader. Political apathy, combined with lack of patriotism, territorial or emotional, created a frame of mind in the generality of the Indians of that age which made little difference between foreigners and their countrymen. But the greatest cause of our country having been over-run so easily and quickly was the employment of shock tactics by Mahmud. He pursued the policy of falling upon our prosperous towns with lightning rapidity and withdrawing himself suddenly and returning to Ghazni with equal speed. His mobile and rapid marches, sudden attacks and equally sudden withdrawals and the repetition of these tactics times out of number created great confusion and demoralisation in our ranks. Our people looked helpless like the peaceful, though brave, members of a household before a daring and callous robber. Before they could gather themselves and make improvised arrangements for protection, the invader, like a robber, was off. They felt that they were now safe; but the invader returned again with his former suddenness and swooped down upon another prosperous town and its wealthy temples and the game went on causing helplessness and alarm. In these circumstances the only thing that could save the situation was a rigid military and political organisation that could make it possible for our troops to remain eternally vigilant; but this pre-supposed one single leader of eminence for the whole country, or, at least, for the whole of northern India, was an impossibility in that age.

As the student proceeds further, he meets with another surprising phenomenon. And that is how soon our people and rulers forgot their suffering and humiliation at the hands of Mahmud, and, after he was dead and gone, they relapsed into their old lethargy. They derived no lesson from the history of his invasions and lost the opportunity of organising themselves for mutual defence and protection. The last quarter of the twelfth century found them as unprepared and disorganised as they had been in the early years of the eleventh century. When Muhammad of Ghur started on his career of conquest of northern India, he met with little resistance and, during the brief period of fifteen years, the Turks once again overran the entire Hindustan—this time as far as the eastern extremity of Bangal. The same causes were at work at the end of the twelfth century as they had been in the beginning of the eleventh century A.D.

Our bid for freedom

Over-running the country was one thing and its effective conquest quite another. It did not mean that the Turks succeeded in capturing easily what they had over-run. The real and effective resistance of our people began only when the Turks attempted to occupy the country and rule over it. Perhaps our people laboured under the mistaken notion that the invader was not concerned with territorial sovereignty and would content himself with mere plunder. But when they saw that his lieutenants were establishing military garrisons and occupying the country, they adopted concerted measures to oppose. The struggle between the Hindushahi kings of the Panjab and their Arab and Turkish neighbours is the story of a remarkable resistance which was put up for centuries. The province of the Panjab could be conquered by the invaders only after over 350 years' (636—1026 A.D.) effort. The Chauhans of Sambhar and Ajmer revolted four times within the brief period of half a decade in order to drive away Muhammad of Ghur's officers. The fort of Ranthambhor could not remain in effective Muslim possession even after 150 years' fighting. The entire Rajasthan could not really be conquered and occupied during this period. One reads in the pages of the *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* that annual expeditions had to be undertaken to the fertile regions of the Ganga and Yamuna Doab by the Sultans, from Qutub-ud-din Aibak down to Balban, and yet it could not be thoroughly subdued. The process of annual conquest of this region, as of several others, had to be repeated throughout the Sultanate period, and the revenue of the Doab could not be collected except at the point of the bayonet. In fact, the Hindus continued their struggle against their Turko-Afghan rulers throughout the period of the Sultanate of Delhi. When one compares the fate of other Asian and European countries, which so tamely submitted to the Arab and Turkish aggression, one cannot but have admiration for our ancestors who fought for long and fought hard against the enemy who had so quickly established his supremacy, political, military and religious, over many countries of the three continents of the world.

Why were foreign pockets allowed to exist on our soil ?

Another surprise that awaits the curious student when he surveys the history of the age is as to why our ancestors did not make a concerted effort to drive the conquerors from the pockets which they had conquered and occupied. At any rate, why were they suffered to

establish their rule in Sindh, Multan and the Panjab ? After their victory over Dahir, the Arabs permanently occupied Sindh and Multan. Mahmud of Ghazni captured the Panjab in the early years of the eleventh century. The rest of India, still being in powerful Hindu hands, should have made a united attempt to expel the Arabs from Multan and Sindh in the eighth century A.D. and the Turks from the Panjab in the eleventh century. The answer is that there was the same old problem as to how to bring about unity among the warring Hindu chiefs. Their bravery and local patriotism were out of the question. Many dozens of contemporary inscriptions in Sanskrit have come down to us describing that the ruler of this State or that defeated *malekshas* and occupied this town or that which had been in their possession. The Chauhans, the Gujara Prathiharas, the Guhilots the Baghelas and several other Rajput ruling families were credited with unusual valour and success in their wars against the Arabs in Multan and Sindh and the Ghaznavides in the Panjab. Individually, they could fight all right; but a collective and united attempt was never made. Secondly, the spirit of aggression and offence seems to have been absent in our rulers and people for ages in the past. Hardly did any king of India even think of waging an aggressive war against any foreign country or foreign people. Thirdly, the Arabs in Multan and Sindh and the Ghaznavides in the Panjab followed the cunning policy of treating the Hindus in their respective States as hostages. Whenever a neighbouring Hindu chief invaded any of these foreign States on Indian soil, the Arab or the Turkish ruler threatened the local Hindus with death and declared that he would demolish the principal temples and break their images to pieces. The contemporary Arab travellers and historians have described in detail this cunning device resorted to by the local Muslim rulers to save themselves from destruction. Al-Idrisi writes in his *Nuzhatul Mushtaq* : "The people make it (the image of the Sun Temple at Multan) the object of a pious pilgrimage, and to obey it is the law. So far is this carried that, when neighbouring princes make war against the country of Multan, either for the purpose of plunder or for carrying off the Idol, the priests have only to meet, threaten the aggressors with its anger and predict their destruction, and the assailants at once renounce their designs. *Without this fear the town of Multan would be destroyed.*" (*Elliot and Dowson*, Vol. I, page 82). Another Arab historian, Al-Masudi, writes in his *Muruj-ul-Zabab*,

composed about 941 A.D. : "When the unbelievers march against Multan and the faithfuls do not feel themselves strong enough to oppose them, they threaten to break their Idol, and their enemies immediately withdraw." (*Elliot and Dowson*, Vol. I, page 23). Our superstitious ancestors, who were far stronger than the later Arabs and Ghaznavides, were thus duped and did not undertake the conquest of Multan or Sindh or the Panjab.

Causes of frequent dynastic changes

When a comparison is made between the Sultanate of Delhi and the Mughul empire that succeeded it, one notices that, while during the latter age one single dynasty ruled over the country for more than 250 years, the former age was characterised by the rise and fall of many ruling dynasties. There were many causes of the frequent dynastic changes between 1206 and 1526. In the first place, there was no fixed or universally recognised law of succession among our Turko-Afghan rulers. According to Islamic theory of sovereignty, any Muslim, irrespective of his birth and position in life, is qualified to be king, provided he is fit and powerful. In view of this theory, ambitious men, whether they were related to the ruling family or not, aspired for the throne. Powerful and ambitious provincial governors during the Sultanate made a successful bid to reach the throne. Iltutmish, Jalal-ud-din Khalji, Ala-ud-din Khalji, Ghiyas-us-din Tughluq and Bahlol Lodi, who became rulers of Delhi, were provincial governors and, with the exception of one, namely, Ala-ud-din, none of these was a member of the ruling family which he supplanted. Many a rebellion was also due to the above cause, for the throne was not considered to be beyond the reach of one who could wield the sword successfully. Secondly, the government was weak. It was based upon personal rule, as opposed to the 'Rule of Law'. The strength of the Government, therefore, depended upon the personality and character of the ruling monarch. There was no guarantee that a capable ruler would be followed by an equally competent successor. As a rule, powerful rulers had weak successors, as the latter were brought up in the luxury of the *harem* which was full of vice. The Turks were foreigners and had to face perpetual opposition from our people who had not given up their attempt to regain their freedom. In these circumstances, the Sultanate could not afford to have a weak ruler on the throne. Hence, the nobles generally preferred an able soldier, whether he belonged to the

ruling family or not. Thirdly, the slave system, which had once produced great leaders, like Qutub-ud-din Aibak, Iltutmish and Balban, degenerated rapidly in our country. The number of slaves rose to thousands. It was not possible to give them all efficient education and training in the art of administration and war; but, as they were slaves of the rulers, they always got enough wealth and leisure and received preferential treatment, with the result that they became a lazy and pampered class. The system, thus, became tainted with corruption and ceased to produce able men. Moreover, a few able slaves, like Malik Kafur and Malik Khusrav, that the age produced, did not possess the loyalty of their predecessors. They acted against the interests of their patron's family. Malik Kafur conspired against the life of his master, Ala-ud-din Khalji, and was suspected to have poisoned him. He was responsible for the blinding of the royal princes and, had he not been put to death in time, he would not have left alive any male member of Ala-ud-din's house. Malik Khusrav actually murdered his royal master, Qutub-ud-din Mubarak, and seized the throne for himself. The degenerated slave system thus became a potent cause of frequent dynastic changes in that age. Fourthly, many of the Sultans of Delhi did not possess a powerful standing army. Ala-ud-din Khalji had wisely laid the foundation of this necessary institution; but his successors allowed it to relapse and, like the previous rulers, depended upon the support of the contingent furnished by the provincial governors. The powerful military governors, thus, acquired a position of king-makers. In fact, military governorship became a stepping stone to the throne. A weak king with no powerful standing army at his back was at the mercy of his powerful barons. This is another reason why so many provincial governors reached the throne of Delhi. Fifthly, Hindu chiefs, who had been deprived of their freedom and country, naturally, continued to entertain the ambition of getting rid of the foreign yoke. The contemporary Persian chroniclers tell us that the Rajputs of Ajmer and Sambhar and those of Gujarat revolted again and again against Qutub-ud-din Aibak. In the time of Iltutmish a powerful Hindu reaction occurred and lasted for many years. Balban was faced with the problem of saving the infant state from the depredations of the people and their leaders, the Rajput chiefs. Ala-ud-din Khalji tried to repress them, but, when his eyes were closed in death, our people again raised their heads. The Sultans were obliged to

fight almost perpetually against the Hindu patriots. In view of this, they had to keep their armies in proper trim and to have on the throne of Delhi a tried soldier who could cope with the Hindu reaction. Weaklings were, therefore, ruthlessly set aside. Sixthly, the ever-recurring Mongol raids, which began after the death of Raziah in 1240, exercised great effect upon the policy and fortunes of the Sultanate. The Mongols had massed themselves on our north-western frontier since the time of Iltutmish. They made frequent raids into the interior of the Panjab and Multan. After Balban's death they made raids into the heart of Hindustan and besieged Delhi more than once. The Sultans were, therefore, obliged to give the first priority to the work of defence and fortification of the frontier. As has been shown in a previous chapter, the threat of Mongol invasions diverted the attention of so able a monarch as Balban from the much-needed conquests in the interior and even urgent suppression of rebellions. Further, the Mongol raids encouraged the forces of discontent. Whenever their invasion took place, the disaffected Hindu chiefs and rebellious *maliks* and *amirs* almost invariably raised their heads. Only a strong government could rise equal to the situation. The Mongol problem produced another important result on the fortune of the Sultanate. When, in the second half of the fourteenth century, the Mongol threat ceased to operate, the morale of the Sultanate of Delhi went down. It was not necessary to be very vigilant and to keep the military establishment in a state of preparedness. In the absence of this, the morale of the troops fell and decay set in. From after Muhammad bin Tughluq there was hardly any Sultan of Delhi who was possessed of military ability of a high order. Disloyalty and corruption became the rule so far as military commanders and officers were concerned. Seventhly, the government of the Sultan was based on force and not on the consent of the governed. The government cared for two duties only, namely, the maintenance of peace and order and the collection of revenues. No attempt was made, except under Firoz Tughluq, to advance even the material interests of the people. It was, therefore, not expected that the Sultans would be supported by the teeming millions over whom they ruled. Sometimes the people deliberately acted against a Sultan because he or she was their ruler. For example, Raziah was put to death by some Hindu rebels or robbers. The chroniclers of the period do not give any indication as to what ideas

the masses of the people entertained about their rulers. The inscriptions, which were usually drafted in hyperbolic style, do not help us. It seems, however, certain that the people were indifferent towards their foreign sovereigns and did not care as to who occupied the throne of Delhi. There is no record to show that the Hindus rallied round any Sultan in the time of distress.

The effect of Turkish impact on our society

When the Arabs, the Turks, the Afghans, the Iranians and other Central Asian foreigners had conquered and settled down in our country and came into close contact with the indigenous population, they influenced our society and culture and were themselves influenced in turn. The history of the impact of Hinduism and Islam upon one another is a theme of absorbing interest. In the eighth and ninth centuries A.D. the Arabs settled in large numbers on the eastern and western coasts in southern India and it was there that the two religions, for the first time, began to influence each other. Northern India remained immune from Islamic influence until the Arab conquest of Sindh. Dr. Tara Chand, in his enthusiasm for his special subject—*Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*—makes us believe that even the great Shankaracharya, who flourished during the later years of the eighth and the early years of the ninth century A.D., was influenced by Islamic theology, although he admits that there is no direct evidence to substantiate his inference. If Shankaracharya borrowed his theory of monism from Islam, why did he fail to condemn and denounce image-worship to which Muslim theologians of all schools of thought are absolutely opposed ? Moreover, can it not be said that two people could develop a similar line of thought, religious or secular, quite independently of each other ? How very much can it be true of Shankaracharya's *Adwait* philosophy when it is realised on all hands that its germs are found in our *shrutis* and that what he preached is only the logical development of the teachings of the ancient *rishis*. Be that as it may, in northern India, at any rate, the presence of the Turks and the Afghans did not produce a revolutionary effect on our religious thoughts and practices. The bhakti movement, as has been explained elsewhere, was not the direct fruit of the contact between Hinduism and Islam. The teeming millions during the period remained practically unaffected so far as their religious thoughts and practices were concerned. Our upper classes, no doubt, showed a keen desire to bring about a compromise

between the two religions and in the south our leaders and people extended very generous treatment to the new-comers. Everywhere the foreigners were accorded a place of honour and allowed freely to make converts to their religion. Some of our leaders, reformers and teachers openly preached the gospel of unity and friendliness. Nanak and Kabir, for instance, emphasised the fact that Hinduism and Islam were two different paths leading to the same destination and that Rama and Rahim, Krishna and Karim, and Allah and Ishwara were different names of the same God. They deprecated priestly ritualism and formalities of all religions and emphasised devotion and true piety. But the Musalmans, as a class, kept aloof and failed to appreciate the Hindu attempt at a compromise. The Hindu society was influenced by the presence of Islam in our midst in two respects. Firstly, the missionary zeal of Islam, which aimed at converting the Hindu population to a foreign religion, strengthened conservatism in our ranks. The Hindu leaders believed that the one way of saving their religion and society from the onslaught of Islam was to make themselves as orthodox in outlook and practice as possible. So, attempts were made to make caste rules more rigorous. Daily rules of life were prescribed with a rigidity that was unknown before. New rules of conduct were formulated in our *Shrutis*. Hindu scholars, like Madhava, Visvesvara and others, wrote works and commentaries prescribing a rigid religious life for the people. Early marriage was brought in. Rigid *purdah* was enforced. Strict rules of diet and marriage were also prescribed. Secondly, some of the democratic principles of Islam were borrowed by our leaders and reformers who stressed the equality of castes and preached that caste was no bar to religious salvation. The bhakti cult, though not the result of the impact of Hinduism and Islam, was, nevertheless, influenced to some extent by the presence of Islam in our midst. Our reformers preached fundamental equality of all religions and unity of God-head. There was a similar effect on our literature, too; but it was slight. Very few among the Hindus took to the study of Persian or Arabic in that age. The Sanskrit and Hindi works of the time do not betray any appreciable Islamic influence on their style or themes. After Amir Khusrav there was no notable musician at Delhi. Indian music, therefore, was little influenced by Islamic ideas. There is no evidence to show that the early Turko-Afghan rulers of Delhi had any fondness for painting. Indian painting continued its even tenure of life

without being, in any way, influenced by the presence of foreigners. The Turko-Afghan rule produced an unhealthy result on the character and dignity of our race. Our upper and middle class people, who had to come into daily contact with the rulers, were obliged to conceal their true feelings about their religion, culture and sundry other matters and to develop a kind of servility of character in order to get on in the world. Many of our men imbibed low cunning and deceit. Therefore, the Hindus, in general, lost manliness of character and straightforwardness in behaviour.

Notwithstanding their desire and determination to the contrary, the conquerors were greatly influenced by our religion and culture. The Indian converts to Islam could not but retain some of their Hindu notions and practices. The worship of saints and shrines was only another form of the Hindu predilection for local and tribal gods which the converts could not shake off. Muslim mysticism, particularly *sufism*, derived inspiration from Hindu *Vedanta*. Some of the Muslim scholars were attracted to the study of Hindu philosophy, like *Yoga* and *Vedanta*. Some studied Hindu medicine and astrology. The Turko-Afghan rulers had to adopt Indian food and to modify their dress to suit Indian conditions and climate. They borrowed the gorgeous ceremonial paraphernalia of the Rajput courts in the field of administration, particularly those of the departments of revenue and finance. They could not fail to make use of Indian elephants in their battles. The Islamic architecture, which the foreigner brought with him, was so greatly modified by our art tradition that it ceased to be purely Islamic. As we have seen elsewhere, the buildings erected by the Sultans of Delhi and the rulers of the provincial dynasties were the result of the united genius and effort of the Hindus and the foreign Musalmans. Though they retained Persian as their court and literary language, it became necessary to make compromise with indigenous languages and the result was the birth of Urdu. Thus, there gradually emerged a linguistic synthesis as the result of our mutual contact. Similarly, Muslim manners and customs were greatly influenced. The Hindu converts to Islam retained their caste in many parts of the country. Some of the aristocratic Muslim families assimilated the Hindu custom of *sati* and *jauhar*. Mr. Titus is right when he says : "……when all is said there seems to be little doubt that Hinduism has wrought a far greater change in Islam than Islam has wrought in Hinduism which still

continues to pursue the even tenor of its way with a complacency and confidence that are amazing." (*Indian Islam* by Titus)

Why the Hindus failed to absorb Muslims

It is a matter of common knowledge with scholars that the assimilative capacity of ancient Hinduism was so great that it completely absorbed within its fold the earlier invaders, like the Greeks, the Sakas and the Huns. But, on the contrary, the same absorbing Hinduism failed to Hinduise the Turko-Afghan foreigners. It is sometimes believed that our ancestors made no attempt to absorb the new-comers and that the Muslims would have too readily agreed to become Indians in outlook, spirit and way of life only if they had been given an opportunity by the Hindus to do so. But the latter kept them at arm's length and refused to inter-dine and inter-marry with them. This view is not altogether correct. We have unimpeachable recorded evidence to show that, during the early days of the advent of the Arabs and the Turks in this country, Hindu rulers and people meted out a very generous treatment to them. In southern India, where the Arabs had settled in large numbers as early as the eighth century A.D. our rulers not only gave the foreigners every facility in their commercial activities, but also definitely encouraged conversion to Islam. The Zamorin of Calicut "gave orders that in every family of fishermen (*makkuvans*) in his dominion one or more of the male members should be brought up as Muhammadans." Like European traders in a later age, the Arabs were granted certain commercial privileges which were not enjoyed by the indigenous mercantile community. As has been related in a previous chapter, Hindu reformers and teachers emphasised that Hinduism and Islam were two different paths leading to the same goal. They preached that Rama and Rahim, Krishna and Karim, and Ishwara and Allah were different names of the same God. An earnest attempt was made to bring about unity between the two communities by deprecating priestly ritualism and formalities and emphasising religious devotion. Not only were the foreign Muslims honoured and respected, but even Indian converts to Islam were shown regard and a treatment which was better than that meted out to lower castes among the Hindus themselves. In one respect, however, our people did not extend to the foreigners' proper courtesy. That was the sphere of inter-dining and inter-marriage, and the reason was obvious. The Hindu has always believed in ceremonial purity, that is, purity

of the body, dress, dwelling place and the mind, while not only the foreign Turk and Afghan but even the Indian Musalman insisted on leading the kind of life led by the Arabs of the desert. Moreover, the Hindus in general were vegetarian, and even those of them who were meat-eaters, abhorred beef. Muhammadans, on the other hand, were almost cent per cent non-vegetarians and were not prepared to give up cow-slaughter and beef-eating. They refused to accept the cult of *bhakti*. They believed in their 'superiority' and branded the Hindus as an inferior people, effete and unprogressive —*dal ke khane wale*. They were proud of their religion which is clear, definite and rigid in its dogmas, and acted as militant missionaries of Islam. And they had little to gain by merging themselves in a society that was caste-ridden and torn by internal dissensions. Moreover, they had the conquerors' innate pride and were determined to retain their separate identity. If the Hindus looked down upon them as unclean (*malekshas*), they returned the compliment by styling them as *kafirs* or infidels. It was not possible for Hindu missionaries and teachers to succeed with a people who punished apostacy from their faith with death and made it a capital crime for anyone to seduce a Musalman from his religion. If a Hindu, who was converted to Islam, showed any inclination to revert to the religion of his forefathers, he was, according to the laws of the Sultanate, to be put to death; and any Hindu who preached that Hinduism and Islam were alike good religions was liable to capital punishment. Moreover, the Muslim practice of converting a Hindu girl to Islam before marrying her and compelling a Hindu to become Muslim before he could be allowed to marry a Muslim woman[1] stood in the way of a real matrimonial alliance between any two families and militated against the attempt at fusion of the two communities. The early Turks and Afghans did not resent their exclusion from inter-dining. In fact, they tried to turn the Hindu prejudice to their advantage by declaring that so and so had partaken of the prohibited food and had, therefore, become defiled and unfit to remain a Hindu. Under these circumstances all the efforts of our rulers and people and reformers and teachers at bringing about unity between the Indian people and the foreigners met with inevitable failure.

[1] Islam insists on the rigid observance of these fanatical rules even in the 20th century. Princess Fatima of Persia was not allowed to marry her lover Vincent Lee Hillyr, until he had renounced Christianity and embraced Islam (May 1950).

APPENDIX A

ORIGIN OF NASIR-UD-DIN KHUSRAV SHAH OF DELHI

Nasir-ud-din Khusrav Shah who succeeded Qutub-ud-din Mubarak Khalji on April 27, 1320 and ruled upto 5th September, 1320 was the only Indian Muslim to sit on the throne of Delhi during the period known as the Sultanate of Delhi (1206—1526 A.D.). The most baffling problem about him is his origin. It is, however, certain that he was originally a Hindu from Gujarat and had fallen into the hands of Ain-ul-mulk Multani during the latter's campaign in Malwa in 1305. He was converted to Islam and given the name of Hasan. He was enrolled as an attendant in the service of Sultan Ala-ud-din Khalji and placed in the custody of Malik Shadi, Deputy Hajib at the Court.[1] Regarding the caste to which he originally belonged contemporary writers have given three versions, namely, Barādo (बरादो), Barāo (बराव) and Barwār (बरवार), which seem to be variants of one and the same word. Amir Khusrav in his celebrated work entitled *Tughluqnama* calls Hasan 'Barādo';[2] Isami says that he was originally a 'Barāo',[3] and Zia-ud-din Barani describes him as a 'Barwār'.[4] Later writers have simply adopted one or the other of the last two variants; some understood their meanings while others did not. For example, *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi* has Barao,[5] *Tabqat-i-Akbari* has Barao,[6] *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh* has Barwar,[7] and *Farishta* has Parwar[8]—no doubt a mistake for Barwar.[8] The Medieval chronicles further describe Hasan as a man of a low caste from Gujarat whose members enjoyed a good reputation as dauntless fighters.[9] But as he was an Indian Muslim and had the audacity

1 Barani's *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi* (Persian Text), p. 391.
2 *Aurangabad Text*, p, 19.
3 *Futuh-us-Salatin*, Agra Text, p. 362, has 'parao', which is no doubt the scribe's error who has placed three dots instead of one.
4 *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi* (Persian Text), Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta, p. 490.
5 *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi*, p. 85.
6 *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, Vol. 1, p. 175.
7 *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Vol. I, p. 203.
8 *Farishta*, p. 124.
9 *Tughluqnama*, p. 19; *Barani*, p. 519; *Ibn Battuta*, Vol. III, p. 198; *Farishta*, p. 124.

to slay Qutub-ud-din Mubarak and capture the throne of Delhi, which had hitherto been the monopoly of foreign Turks from Central Asia, the chroniclers who belonged to the foreign Muslim stock and were of the clerical profession heaped upon him vile epithets, such as base, low-born, ungrateful, faithless and cunning. Misled by these unwarranted expressions and wrongly assuming that Barwar must be the same as modern Parwar or Parwari, some European historians have jumped to the conclusion that hasan *alias* Khusrav Shah was a Parwari or despised scavenger whose touch was a pollution to high-caste Hindus. Briggs, the translator of *Farishta*, was the first to observe : "The Parwari is a Hindu outcaste, who eats flesh of all kinds, and is deemed so unclean as not to be admitted to build a house within the town."[10] Molesworth defined Parwari as "an individual of low caste, chiefly employed as village watchmen, gatekeepers, porters, and said to be synonymous with Dhed and Mahar."[11] Edward Thomas, another notable writer, endorsed Brigg's conclusion.[12] Sir Woolseley Haig, the latest European authority on the subject, has expressed himself even more strongly : "The wretch (Khusrav)," he writes, "was by origin a member of one of those castes whose touch is pollution to a Hindu, whose occupation is that of scavengers, and whose food consists of the carrion which it is their duty to remove from byre and field."[13] Among modern Indian writers who have fallen in line with the above European scholars the names of Dr. Ishwari Prasad and Dr. Mahdi Husain may be especially mentioned. Nasir-ud-din Khusrav's origin was one of the first controversies that Dr. Prasad was called upon to resolve in his D.Litt. thesis, entitled *The Qaraunah Turks in India*, Vol. I. He discussed it in a long foot-note of over 840 words and ended by accepting Brigg's views in their entirety . (vide *Qaraunah Turks in India*, Vol. I, pp. 8-11, fn. 21). He has been as bitter against Khusrav as any medieval writer, calling him outcaste, unclean, parwari, whom every one hated and despised. Dr. Mahdi Husain opined that "Barwar is probably a misprint of Parwar" (vide *Rise and Fall of Muhammad bin Tughluq*, p. 28n), and hence endorsed the conclusion of Briggs and Woolseley Haig.

There is, on the other hand, another school of European

10 Brigg's *Farishta*, Vol. I, p. 387n.
11 Molesworth's *Marathi-English Dictionary*, 2nd edition, p. 492.
12 *Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi*, p. 184n.
13 *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. III, p. 120.

historians who do not attach any value to the foul abuse of the Muslim chroniclers, and are of the opinion that Khusrav Shah was a Parmar Rajput. For example, James Bird who translated *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* into English under the title of *History of Gujarat* says that *Parwar* is nothing else than *Parmar*.[14] He is supported by Bayley[15] and Talboys Wheeler.[16] The main arguments are that (a) 'Parmar' has been misread as 'Parwar' by Briggs, and that (b) Khusrav Shah could not have belonged to a depressed caste as he and his castemen were noted for their bravery and martial talent, and in disregard of personal danger had taken valiant parts in a number of battles, and successfully managed the affairs of an empire, which it was not possible for scavengers to do.

Both these theories are based on mere guess or argumentation and are, therefore, untenable. In the first place, 'Pramar' or 'Parmar' in Arabic script cannot be read as 'Parwar', as one is written with م and the other with و. It is inconceivable that all the scribes and editors of nearly a dozen Persian works from Barani to Farishta should have committed such a gross error in spelling, and that it would have gone undetected by the modern Persian knowing historians. Secondly, had Khusrav Shah really been a Pramar, he would have been like the Sisodias, the Rathors and the Kachhwahas, designated by the general term 'Rajput' with which the medieval Muslim writers were so intimately familiar. At any rate, he would not have been dubbed a low-caste Hindu. It is too much to suppose that all the medieval Indian historians from Amir Khusrav to Farishta were ignorant of "the intricate and obscure nomenclature of Hindu tribes and castes," as the late Professor Hodivala[17] has attempted to argue; and, as we shall presently see, there is no doubt that at least Amir Khusrav, Barani, Nizam-ud-din Ahmad and Badauni were acquainted with the caste to which Khusrav Shah originally belonged. And finally the names of Khusrav Shah's relatives who were Hindus, such as, Jaharia and Randhol (not Ramdhol as Professor Sri Ram Sharma wrongly supposes) are suggestive of a low origin and certainly not of Pramar or any other high caste among the Hindus.[18]

14 *History of Gujarat*, p. 167.
15 *Local Muhammadan Dynasties*, Gujarat, p. 41n.
16 *History of India from the Earliest Age*, Vol. IV, Part I, p. 68.
17 *Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, p. 370.
18 Barani in *Elliot and Dowson*, Vol. III, p. 222 ; and *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, p. 187.

Nor does the theory of Khusrav Shah's 'Bhangi' origin stand the test of historical criticism. Firstly, medieval authorities describe him as a man of low caste, but not one of them says that he or his ancestors belonged to the scavenger caste. This theory owes its origin to the fertile imagination of Briggs who has been unsuspectingly followed by some other European writers. Secondly, in Gujarat to which Khusrav Shah and his caste fellows belonged and to which province they fled after their defeat at the hands of Ghazi Tughluq in 1320 A.D., scavengers are not called Parwaris—the term which Briggs and Edward Thomas sought to identify with Barwar or Parwar—and the Gujaratis do not recognise it as a synonym of Dhed or Mahar. Thirdly, all authorities, contemporary and later, maintain that Khusrav Shah and his castemen were brave warriors and that some of them were well-to-do men of standing and reputation in the country. Scavengers who are a down-trodden people never enjoyed any reputation for courage in war and administration.

Inspite of these obvious difficulties the present writer is unable to agree with Professor Hodivala, Dr. K.S. Lal and Professor Sri Ram Sharma that "the real name of the tribe or caste to which Khusrav belonged *is not known and cannot be ascertained.*"[19] Any first-rate scholar of medieval Indian History acquainted with contemporary sources in original Persian will readily concede that the various terms used by our authorities to denote Khusrav's caste are the variants of one and the same word, namely 'Barwar' which is employed by his exact contemporary Zia-ud-din Barani whenever he refers to Khusrav's origin. It is equally certain that Barwar (बरवार) of Barani and other first-rate Persian chroniclers is nothing else but Bharwar (भरवार) or Bharvad (भरवाड़), all the three of which are written almost identically in Arabic script, and in Persian *shikast* (cursive writing of MS); they look absolutely alike and can be easily confounded. According to a standard Gujarati dictionary Bharvad or Bharvar means a shepherd,[20] and Bharvads abound in Gujarat, the home-province of Khusrav, and many of them were then, as now, well-to-do people and engaged in sheep-farming and agriculture. The shepherd is not a high caste among the Hindus; nor is it as low as 'Chamar', 'Dhanuk', 'Pasi or 'Bhangi' (scavenger).

19 *Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, p. 369; *History of the Khaljis*, p. 351; Nasir-ud-din Khusrav Shah in *Indian Historical Quarterly*, 1950.

20 *Jodnikosh* of Shri D. B. Kalekar, published by Gujarat Vidyapith.

In social status Bharvad or *gadaria* (as he is called in Uttar Pradesh) is on par with 'Ahir', 'Kurmi' and 'Lodha', and is very hardy and brave. On account of these qualities Bharvads were employed by nobles and kings as attendants, gatekeepers, personal servants and troops. Nizam-ud-din Ahmad is right when he says that Bharvads were employed as household servants and were found in plenty in Gujarat.[21] Yahiya is equally right in describing Khusrav a *pāsbān* or gatekeeper,[22] and Farishta in designating him as one of the *pahalwāns* or wrestlers of Gujarat.[23] It is thus certain that Nasir-ud-din Khusrav Shah belonged originally to the shepherd or Bharvad caste of Gujarat.

Professor Sri Ram Sharma has recently added to the complexity of the problem by propounding yet another theory, namely, that Khusrav Shah on his accession repudiated Islam and attempted to re-establish Hindu domination in the country, though he did not assume for himself Hindu name and title. "It is but natural," writes Professor Sharma, "that on his accession to the throne he should go back to his original faith. He lived in the royal palace of his predecessors, and with the accession of a Hindu king, Hindu rites of worship displaced Muslim rites in the palace. Like Ajit Singh of Jodhpur in the eighteenth century, Khusrav did not take a Hindu title as a reigning king..."[24] This view is not based on any contemporary or even later record and betrays a desire to read in the Persian texts more than what their authors intended to convey. No writer from Amir Khusrav down to Farishta anywhere says definitely or even by implication that Khusrav Shah had forsaken Islam or that he wanted to set up a Hindu Raj. On the contrary, the historian Nizam-ud-din Ahmad writes in clear terms that "as most of the Bharwars were Hindus, Islamic ways received a setback and the rites of the Hindus got encouragement and propagation. Idol-worship was publicised and the mosques were desecrated."[25] This categorical evidence knocks the bottom out of Professor Sharma's theory and proves conclusively that Khusrav Shah remained a Muslim as before, and the Hindu worship in the palace was conducted by those of his relatives who were Hindu by faith.

21 *Tabqat-i-Akbari,* Vol. I, p. 176.
22 *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi*, p. 82.
23 *Farishta*, Vol. I, p. 124.
24 Vide his paper referred to earlier.
25 *Tabqat-i-Akbari,* Vol. I, p. 187.

APPENDIX B

CHRONOLOGY OF THE DELHI SULTANS

Name	*Christian era*	*Hijri era*
The Yamini Dynasty :		
1. Mahmud Yamin-ud-daulah of Ghazni	998 A.D.	388 A.H.
First invasion of India	1000	
2. Muhammad	1030	421
3. Masud I	1030	421
4. Maudud	1040	432
5. Masud II	1049	440
6. Ali	1049	440
7. Abdul Rashid	1052	444
8. Farrukh Zad	1053	444
9. Ibrahim	1059	451
10. Masud III	1099	492
11. Sher Zad	1115	508
12. Arsalam Shah	1116	509
13. Bahram Shah	1118	512
14. Khusrav Shah	1152	547
15. Khusrav Malik	1160-1186	555
The Shansbani Dynasty :		
1. Saif-ud-din Suri	1148 A.D.	543 A.H.
2. Ala-ud-din Husain *Jashan Soz*	1149	544
3. Saif-ud-din Muhammad	1161	556
4. Ghiyas-ud-din bin Sam	1163	558
5. Muiz-ud-din Muhammad Ghur		
Accession at Ghazni	1173	569
Conquers the Panjab	1186	
Accession at Ghur	1201-1206	598
The Qutubi Dynasty :		
1. Qutub-ud-din Aibak	1206 A.D.	602 A.H.
2. Aram Shah	1210-1211	607
The House of Iltutmish :		
1. Shams-ud-din Iltutmish	1211 A.D.	607 A.H.

2.	Rukn-ud-din Firoz	1236	633
3.	Raziah	1236	634
4.	Muiz-ud-din Bahram	1240	637
5.	Ala-ud-din Masud	1242	639
6.	Nasir-ud-din Mahmud	1246-1265	644
The House of Balban :			
1.	Baha-ud-din Balban	1265 A.D.	664 A.H.
2.	Muiz-ud-din Kaiqubad	1287	686
3.	Shams-ud-din Kaiumars	1290	689
The Khalji Dynasty :			
1.	Jalal-ud-din Firoz Khalji	1290 A.D.	689 A.H.
2.	Rukn-ud-din Ibrahim	1296	695
3.	Ala-ud-din Muhammad	1296	695
4.	Shihab-ud-din Umar	1316	715
5.	Qutub-ud-din Mubarak	1316	716
6.	Nasir-ud-din Khusrav—not a Khalji	1320	720
The Tughluq Dynasty :			
1.	Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq I	1320 A.D.	720 A.H.
2.	Muhammad bin Tughluq	1325	725
3.	Firoz bin Rajab	1351	752
4.	Ghiyas-ud-din II	1388	790
5.	Abu Bakr	1389	791
6.	Muhammad bin Firoz	1390	792
7.	Sikandar	1394	795
8.	Mahmud	1395	795
9.	Nasrat Shah (Inter-regnum)	1396	797
10.	Mahmud (Restored)	1399	801
11.	Daulat Khan Lodi (elected)	1413-1414	815
The Sayyid Dynasty :			
1.	Khizr Khan Sayyid	1414 A.D.	817 A.H.
2.	Muiz-ud-din Mubarak	1421	824
3.	Muhammad Shah	1434	837
4.	Ala-ud-din Alam Shah	1445-1451	849
The Lodi Dynasty :			
1.	Bahlol Lodi	1451 A.D.	855 A.H.
2.	Sikandar Lodi	1489	894
3.	Ibrahim Lodi	1517-1526	929-932

APPENDIX C

THE PRINCIPAL AUTHORITIES

Our chief sources of information for a history of the Sultanate period are mainly in Persian and partly in Arabic. The chroniclers were foreign Turks or Afghans who, as a rule, were interested in the progress of Islam in India and the affairs at the court. They were not scientific historians and confined their attention to the doings of the monarchs and paid little attention to the activity of the people. The works can be divided into three classes, namely, (a) Chronicles, (b) Travels, and (c) Modern works.

CHRONICLES

1. **Chach-Nama.** This work is a history of the Arab conquest of Sindh and was originally written in Arabic. It was translated into Persian by Muhammad Ali bin Abu Bakr Kufi in the time of Nasir-ud-din Qubachah to whom it was dedicated by the translator. It has recently been edited and published by Dr. Daudpota of Karachi. The work gives a brief account of Sindh before and after Muhammad bin Qasim's invasion. It is full of names of places and details of important incidents. It is our principal authority on the condition of Sindh at the time of its conquest by the Arabs and on the circumstances leading to that conquest.

2. **Tarikh-i-Sindh** *alias* **Tarikh-i-Masumi**, by Mir Muhammad Masum of Bhakkra. This is a detailed history of Sindh and was written about 1600 A.D. It gives the history of the province from the date of its conquest by the Arabs and comes down to the time of Akbar. It is divided into four chapters. Although it is not a a contemporary work and is based principally on *Chach-Nama*, it gives a fairly accurate picture of the circumstances that led to the Arab invasion and also the causes of Muhammad bin Qasim's success.

3. **Kitab-ul-Yamini**, by Abu Nasr bin Muhammad al Jabbarul Utbi. This work gives the history of the reigns of Subuktigin and Mahmud of Ghazni and comes down to 1020. It is more a work of literature than of history, as it is full of figures of speech

and roundabout expressions. Utbi does not give details. He has practically the same thing to say about the various invasions of Mahmud. He is deficient in dates too. Inspite of these defects, it ranks as a first-rate authority on the early life and activity of Mahmud.

4. Zain-ul-Akhbar, by Abu Said. It is primarily a history of Persia and throws some light on the career of Mahmud of Ghazni. It gives a good account of that monarch's activities. It is precise in dates and accurate in events.

5. Tarikh-i-Masudi, by Abul Fazl Muhammad bin Husain-al-Baihaqi. It gives a history of Mahmud of Ghazni and of Masud. It describes court life and intrigues of officials. It is a valuable work.

6. Tarikh-ul-Hind, by Al-Beruni. The author of this work was born in 970-71 A.D. and belonged to Khwarizm. He came to India and took up service under Mahmud of Ghazni. He was a great scholar of Arabic and Persian. He was profoundly interested in mathematics, medicine, logic, philosophy, theology and religion, and was one of the greatest scholars of his age. He stayed in India for many years and studied Sanskrit and Hindu religion and philosophy. He translated two Sanskrit works into Arabic and a number of Arabic works into Persian. He was the author of many books, the most important among which, for our purpose, is his *Tarikh-ul-Hind*. It gives an account of the literature, sciences and religion of the Hindus as he found them at the commencement of the 11th century. He was a very sympathetic observer of things and his accounts are noted for their accuracy and scholarly presentation. *Tarikh-ul-Hind* is the primary authority on the condition of India at the time of Mahmud of Ghazni's invasions. This book is written in masterly Arabic. It was translated into Persian. Sachau has rendered it into good English. Al-Beruni died in 1038-39.

7. Kamil-ut-Tawarikh, by Shaikh Abdul Hasan, popularly known as 'Ibn-ul-Asir'. The author belonged to Mesopotamia. He completed his work in 1230. This work is mainly a history of Central Asia, particularly of the rise of the Shansbani dynasty of Ghur, but he also gives an account of Muhammad of Ghur's conquest of Hindustan. Ibnul Asir was a contemporary writer and his work is characterised by a critical judgment. His description of Indian affairs, though correct in dates and essential facts, is meagre and seems to have been based on hearsay.

8. Taj-ul-Maasir, by Hasan Nizami. This book gives a narrative of the occurrences from 1192 to 1228 and is thus an important authority on the career and reign of Qutub-ud-din Aibak and on the early years of Iltutmish. It is written a highly florid style. Hasan Nizami was a foreigner who came to India during one of the invasions of Muhammad of Ghur and settled down in the country. Being a contemporary writer with opportunities to acquire first-hand information about important happenings, his work is a primary authority on the early history of the Sultanate of Delhi.

9. Tabqat-i-Nasiri, by Minhaj-ud-din Abu Umar bin Siraj-ud-din al-Juzjani, popularly known as Minhaj-us-Siraj. It is a contemporary work and describes the general history of the Muslim world. It was completed in 1260. Its chief value lies in the fact that it gives a first-hand account of the conquest of Hindustan by Muhammad of Ghur and the history of the newly established Turkish kidgdom in India from its birth down to the year 1260. Minhaj-us-Siraj was not only a contemporary but also an actual participator in some of the events described by him, as he held the high office of chief *qazi* at Delhi under Nasir-ud-din Mahmud. But Minhaj is not an impartial writer. He is biased in favour of Muhammad of Ghur and the dynasty of Iltutmish. He was a great admirer of Balban. He paints him as a great hero and administrator free from faults. Inspite of the author's avowed partiality, the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* is a first-rate authority on the early history of the Sultanate of Delhi. The author gives a connected account of the occurrences and is generally correct in dates and facts. It is a pity that though he lived till the accession of Balban, Minhaj did not continue his history down to the death of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud. Owing to this omission the history of the period, from 1260 to 1265, is a blank. The work has been translated into English by Raverty and enriched by valuable notes and explanations. The translation is, on the whole, free from defects.

10. The Khaza'in-ul-Futuh, by Amir Khusrav. The author of this work was pre-eminently a poet and successfully tried all forms of poetical composition. He held the office of poet-laureate from 1290 till his death in 1325. He was, therefore, a contemporary of all the rulers of Delhi from Jalal-ud-din Khalji to Muhammad bin Tughluq. He intended the *Khaza'in-ul-futuh* to be a court history of Ala-ud-din, and consequently the author did not take notice of the

facts that went against his patron. He makes no mention of the murder of Jalal-ud-din or of the defeats of Ala-ud-din at the hands of the Mongols. He has exaggerated his patron's achievements. Inspite of these defects, the work is of solid merit. The author has avoided telling lies and his work gives correct dates of events. He was an eye-witness of most of the happenings and, consequently, his narrative is of special value. The work is written in a highly ornate Persian. It has been translated into English by Prof. M. Habib (with an introduction by the late S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar) under the title of "The Campaigns of Ala-ud-din Khalji" (1931).

11. Tarikh-i-Firozshahi, by Zia-ud-din Barani. The author of this book was a man of noble descent and his ancestors held high offices under the Khalji monarchs. Barani himself was an exact contemporary of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq, Muhammad bin Tughluq and Firoz Tughluq and was on terms of intimate friendship with Muhammad bin Tughluq. His work commences with the accession of Balban and comes down to the sixth year of the reign of Firoz Tughluq. The work is, thus, our most important authority on the Khalji period and on the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq and a part of that of Firoz Tughluq. It was completed in 1359. The work is full of anecdotes, but it is very deficient in dates and details. Barani seems to be very fond of long discourses and is, at times, guilty of distortion of facts. Sometimes he colours his account with his own personal opinions. He has ignored chronological arrangement in his narrative. The chief merit of the book is that, as the author held an important post in the revenue department, he was fully acquainted with the revenue administration which he has described in detail.

Barani was a highly educated man and he knew the duties and responsibilities of a historian. Yet he was not free from prejudice. His style is obscure. Hence at places it is difficult to comprehend the meaning of the text. It has been published by the Asiatic Society of Bangal.

12. Fatawah-i-Jahandari, by Zia-ud-din Barani. This work was completed early in the 14th century. In this work he gives his own views about government policy—secular and religious. It is an ideal political code which Barani would like a Muslim ruler to follow.

13. Futuh-us-Salatin, by Khwaja Abu Malik Isami. This

is a poetical history of the Sultanate of Delhi from the time of the Ghaznavide dynasty to that of Muhammad big Tughluq. It was completed in 1349. It was written in the Dakhin and dedicated to Ala-ud-din Hasan, the first ruler of the Bahamani dynasty. The book has been published by Dr. Mahdi Husain. It is useful for the history of the Sultanate of Delhi.

14. Kitab-ur-Rahlab. This is a book of travels composed by the famous Moorish traveller, Ibn Battuta. He started on his travels in 1325 and visited Northern Africa, Arabia, Iran, the Levant and Constantinople. Then he came to India and reached Sindh on the 12th September, 1333. He remained in our country upto 1342. He was appointed *qazi* of Delhi by Muhammad bin Tughluq. He held this office for eight years. Then he lost the emperor's favour and was imprisoned. He was released sometime after and sent as an ambassador to China in 1342. He met with a mishap on the way owing to his ship being wrecked and returned to Delhi. Then he proceeded to Maldive Islands where he stayed for a year and was appointed a judge. In 1345 he travelled to Ceylon whence he returned to southern India and stayed at Madura. Finally he went to perform the pilgrimage at Macca. Thence he returned to his native country Morocco in 1349. A little later he performed another short journey to Central Africa and finally settled down in Morocco in 1353. Here he wrote the above account of his journey. He died at the age of 73 in 1377-78. Ibn Battuta was a highly learned man and wrote his book in Arabic. As he stayed in our country for over eight years, during which period he was closely connected with the court, he had a good opportunity of knowing facts. His work is, therefore, a primary authority on the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq and also on the manners and customs and the condition of the country during the period. The work suffers from some defects. The author is, sometimes, inclined to be gossipy. Moreover, he was not well acquainted with Persian or Hindi and, therefore, could not derive information from all sources.

15. Tarikh-i-Firozshahi, by Shams-i-Siraj Afif. It is a history of the reign of Firoz Tughluq. The author was born in 1350 and became a member of Firoz Shah's court. He wrote this book after Timur's departure in 1398. It is a first-rate authority on the reign of Firoz Tughluq.

16. The Sirat-i-Firozshahi. It is an anonymous work and

was compiled in 1370. It was written at the monarch's dictation and is very useful for the history of his reign.

17. Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi, by Yahia bin Ahmad. It is the only contemporary authority on the Sayyid dynasty. It is a valuable work and is generally accurate in dates and description of events.

18. Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afghana, by Ahmad Yadgar. This compilation deals with the history of the Afghans in India. It gives an account of the rise and fall of the Lodis and those of the Surs. It is not a contemporary work, as the author wrote this book in the time of Akbar. Nevertheless, it is very useful for a history of the Lodi period.

19. Tarikh-i-Shershahi *alias* **Tohfa-i-Akbarshahi**, by Abbas Sarwani. Though primarily a history of the Surs, it gives some account of the Lodis. It was written at the orders of Akbar and is, therefore, not a contemporary work. Yet it is very useful for a history of the Lodi period.

20. Makhzan-i-Afghana, by Niamatullah. This work was composed in the reign of Jahangir. It gives a geneological account of the various Afghan tribes. There is another work by the same author called *Tarikh-i-Khan Jahan Lodi wa Makhzan-i-Afghana*. Both these are important for the Lodi period.

21. Tarikh-i-Daudi, by Abdullah. This work was also written during the reign of Jahangir. Like all other Afghan works, it is full of anecdotes and undue praise of the Afghan rulers. It is deficient in dates. Nevertheless, it is indispensable for a history of the Lodis. A copy of this MS is found at Khudabux Library, Patna.

Some of the general works composed in the time of Akbar are also useful for this period; for example, *Akbarnama* and *Ain-i-Akbari* of Abul Fazl, *Muntakhav-ut-Tawarikh* of Badauni, *Tabqat-i-Akbari* of Nizam-ud-din Ahmad and *Tarikh-i-Farishta* of Hindu Beg. *Tuzuk-i-Baburi* is indispensable for the history of the closing phase of the Lodi dynasty.

TRAVELS

1. Al-Beruni. The great Turkish savant, Al-Beruni may be regarded as one of the earliest travellers to India. As has been related, he came from Khwarizm and stayed in our country for some time. His famous work, popularly known as *Al-Beruni's India*, has been translated into English by Sachau (Trubner's Oriental Series). (See No. 6 of the Chronicles)

2. **Ibn Battuta.** He was primarily a traveller who reached Sindh in 1333 and stayed in our country for eight years. He recorded the result of his observations in his well-known *Rahlah*, an account of which has already been given (*vide* No. 13 of the Chronicles). One translation into English is by Lee and the other is by Gibbs.

3. **Travels of Marco Polo.** (Edited by Yule) This world-famous traveller visited southern India in the 13th century and left an account of his impressions in his travel book. Although he does not give many details, yet the work is useful for our period.

4. **Abdur Razzaq.** Razzaq was a Persian who came as an envoy to the court of the king of Vijayanagar where he stayed from 1442 to 1443. He has left a good account of the conditions—political, administrative, economic and cultural—of Vijayanagar. No history of that state can be complete without making use of the description left by Abdur Razzaq.

5. **Nicolo Conti.** Conti was an Indian traveller who visited our country in 1520. His account of our country, its manners and customs and the condition of the people is as that of Abdur Razzaq.

6. **Domingos Paes.** Paes was a Portuguese traveller who visited southern India like the above two travellers. He has left a detailed description of Vijayanagar. His description is full of matter of fact things and is valuable.

7. **Edoardo Barbosa.** Barbosa visited India in 1516 and his description of Vijayanagar in particular, and southern India in general, is important.

Besides the above, there are some literary works which throw considerable light on the condition of the country during the period. The most important among them are Amir Khusrav's, such as, *Qiran-us-Sadain* and others and *Munsha-i-Mahru* of Ain-ul-Mulk Multani.

MODERN WORKS

1. Aiyangar, K. S., *South India and Her Muhammadan Invaders.*
2. Ali, Amir, *History of the Saracens.*
3. Ashraf, K. M., *Life and Condition of the People of Hindustan.*
4. Beal, S., *Life of Hiuen Tsang.*
5. Bhandarkar, R. G., *Early History of the Deccan.*
6. Dorn, *History of the Afghans.*
7. Dubril, J., *Ancient History of the Deccan.*
8. Elliot and Dowson, *History of India as Told by its own Historians.*
9. Farquhar, *Outline of the Religious Literature of India.*

10. Grierson, Sir George, *Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindustan.*
11. Habib, Muhammad, *Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni.*
12. ——*Life and Times of Mahmud of Ghazni.*
13. Habibullah, *The Foundation of Muslim Rule in India.*
14. Haig, Woolseley, *Cambridge History of India.*
15. Havell, F. B., *Indian Architecture.*
16. Hitti, Phillip K., *The Arabs.*
17. Hussain, Mahdi, *Rise and Fall of Muhammad bin Tughluq.*
18. Hussain, Wahed, *Administration of Justice in Muslim India.*
19. Lal, K. S., *History of the Khaljis.*
20. Lanepoole, Stanley, *Medieval India.*
21. Majumdar, R. C., *History of Bengal*, Vol. I.
22. ——*Arab Invasion of India.*
23. ——*The Classical Age.*
24. Majumdar, Ray-Chaudhary and Datta, *Advanced History of India*, Vol. I.
25. Mallet, *History of Sindh.*
26. Nadvi, Sulaiman, *Arabs and India* (Hindi and Urdu editions).
27. Nilkantha Shastri, K. A., *The Cholas.*
28. ——*The Pandya Kingdom.*
29. Ojha, G. H., *History of Rajasthan* (Hindi edition).
30. Pannikar, K. M., *A Survey of Indian History.*
31. Prasad, Ishwari, *A History of the Qaraunah Turks in India*, Vol. I.
32. Qureshi, I. H., *Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi.*
33. Ray, H. C., *Dynastic History of Northern India*, Vol. II.
34. Ray-Chaudhary, *Political History of Ancient India.*
35. Saletore, *Social and Political Life in the Vijayanagar Empire.*
36. Sewell, *A Forgotten Empire.*
37. Sherwani, H. K., *Mahmud Gawan.*
38. Smith, V. A., *The Oxford History of India.*
39. Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture.*
40. Thomas, Edward, *The Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi.*
41. Titus, *Indian Islam*
42. Tripathi, R. P., *History of Kanauj.*
43. ——*Some Aspects of Muslim Administration.*
44. Vaidya, C. V., *Downfall of Hindu India.*
45. Venkataramanayya, N., *Vijayanagar—Origin of the City and Empire.*
46. Warsi, *History of Ala-ud-din.*
47. Watters, Thomas, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, Vol. I.

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